United Nations A/73/372

General Assembly

Distr.: General
12 September 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 142 of the provisional agenda*
Human resources management

Global human resources strategy 2019–2021: building a more effective, transparent and accountable United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In his report entitled "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: ensuring a better future for all" (A/72/492), the Secretary-General outlined his vision for a new management paradigm to ensure better use of the Organization's resources in support of programme delivery and mandate implementation. Although human resources reforms have been undertaken over the past decade, the Secretary-General is seeking to make the Organization more operational and effective.

In the present report, the Secretary-General presents a new global human resources strategy for the Organization, setting out a series of bold objectives and strategic actions to transform human resources management in the Secretariat.

The strategy will create an enabling policy environment for people management, catalyse proactive talent acquisition and management and contribute to a transformed organizational culture. It will ensure that the Organization can retain and nurture staff with the skill sets and dynamism required to address the complex and changing nature of global challenges.

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I. The case for change

1. In his report entitled "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: ensuring a better future for all" (A/72/492), the Secretary-General outlined his vision for a new management paradigm to ensure better use of the Organization's resources in support of programme delivery and mandate implementation. Reforming the management of its human resources is an important element of the Secretary-General's vision for a stronger, more effective and more agile Organization. The reform efforts should enable the tens of thousands of women and men who serve the Organization with pride and dedication, often in very difficult and dangerous environments, to perform their tasks with greater ease and with fewer bureaucratic impediments.

2. Although human resources reforms have been undertaken over the past decade, the Secretary-General is seeking to make the Organization more operational and effective. The Organization continues to struggle with the challenge of getting people with the right skills to the right place at the right time. Recruitment is still too slow to allow the Secretariat to respond rapidly to emerging needs. Many human resources processes are centralized, rigid and cumbersome, and policies are not sufficiently adapted to the field and are not always consistently applied. A fundamental shift in mindset is required. The strategic human resources function in the Secretariat must work to define a common vision for the Organization and align its policies and frameworks with that common vision. It must focus on attracting, recruiting and retaining talent, including through measures to foster meaningful career development and address staff health and well-being. Human resources management must also more effectively address the planning and reshaping of the workforce. In short, the human resources function must ensure that the Organization is able to retain and nurture staff with the skill sets and dynamism required to meet new and emerging challenges.

3. The diversity and complexity of the global United Nations presence must be matched by a diverse, geographically balanced, gender-balanced, international and multitalented workforce that is truly representative of, and benefits, all the peoples that the Organization serves through a strong sense of duty and purpose to uphold the values on which the United Nations was built and for which it stands. A strong United Nations, staffed by an agile, multidisciplinary, multilingual and independent international civil service, is needed more than ever. Challenging political, economic and social contexts are changing the way that the United Nations operates and transforming workforce requirements. Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires a reformed United Nations system that can pool its strengths and foster integration on all fronts.

4. To meet the current and future challenges the United Nations system must attract and retain a highly skilled international civil service that can work across disciplines and sectors. It needs leaders with a "One United Nations" mindset and the skills to build strong partnerships for peace, security and sustainable development.

5. The complexity and changing nature of global challenges demand streamlined and simplified workforce planning and management, including performance management and training, that ensure that the overall staff profile keeps pace with what the United Nations is called upon to achieve at any given time and that the Secretariat is managed with competence, integrity, efficiency, effectiveness in pragmatic action, transparency and accountability.

6. The global human resources strategy 2019–2021 provides the road map and tools to nurture this mobile, dynamic and multitalented workforce. It properly supports the needs of field-based staff, including national staff serving in difficult

mission contexts. It will empower managers through increased delegation of authority, transparent accountability mechanisms and an enabling policy framework. It will bring decision-making closer to the field, thus speeding up programme and mandate delivery. Increased leveraging of technology and simplified and streamlined policies and procedures will facilitate proactive talent management, speed up deployment and increase staff mobility.

7. These changes will contribute to creating an organizational culture that focuses on results, recognizes innovation and high performance and better manages risks. Increased opportunities for continuous learning, including language learning, will help managers and staff to create this cultural shift.

8. The strategy is forward-looking and integrated, incorporating all aspects of human resources management. It will be updated as needed to guide human resources management in the years to come.

Guiding principles

9. The global human resources strategy is guided by the principles laid out in the Charter of the United Nations: "The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible."

10. The strategy reflects the Secretary-General's vision for shifting the management paradigm of the United Nations. It is aligned with the principles of equitable geographical representation and gender parity, as reflected in the Secretary-General's system-wide strategy on gender parity, and informed by the results of the recent United Nations staff engagement survey. It reflects the Secretary-General's commitment to increasing the regional diversity of the workforce.

11. The strategy places the staff member at the centre of a transformed human resources function. It gives emphasis to the principles of fairness, trust, agility and client-orientation, as well as to greater and more equitable access by all staff to learning and career development opportunities.

II. Components of the strategy

12. An enabling policy environment, combined with proactive talent management, will drive the transformation of United Nations organizational culture. Specific goals and actions set out under three interlinked components will transform human resources management practices across the Secretariat. Robust learning elements will drive the adoption of the proposed changes across the components. The proposed actions build on the results of prior reforms, as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General providing an overview of human resources management reform for 2017–2018 (A/73/372/Add.1).

Human resources strategy components

A. An enabling policy environment for strategic people management

Goal: a simplified, decentralized, flexible and field-oriented human resources policy framework to drive strategic human resources management and support the delegation of authority

13. An enabling policy environment provides the foundation for transforming human resources management within the Organization. Simplification of the human resources policy framework, including streamlined staff regulations and rules, will ensure that policies are flexible, field-oriented and client-sensitive and aligned with rational and decentralized delegations of authority. Changes will be aligned to policy frameworks across the development and peace and security reform pillars, to achieve collective ways of working and to reinforce accountability and transparency across the United Nations.

14. Strategic actions will include:

(a) **Development of a streamlined delegation of authority framework for human resources management**. The new delegation of authority framework will strengthen the accountability of managers for the delivery of results. It will provide delineation of roles and responsibilities, align authority with responsibility and ensure greater ownership for programme planning and delivery. Staff regulations and rules governing the administration of human resources will be adjusted to simplify and clarify managerial responsibilities and accountabilities;

(b) **Simplification and streamlining of human resources policies aligned with the needs in the field**. Increased client orientation and the separation of policy and operational functions will revitalize the Organization's capacity to simplify and streamline human resources policies and procedures. Through ongoing and future

reviews of the entire human resources regulatory framework the human resources policy framework will be rebuilt from the ground up. Obsolete policies will be abolished, and others simplified or consolidated. Contractual arrangements will be reviewed to meet the evolving needs, including rapid deployment and downsizing. Current and future simplifications of the framework will be widely disseminated, ensuring transparency and consistency in the application of human resources policies;

(c) **Review of conditions of service to attract and retain the best talent, sustain a competent, diverse, multilingual and mobile workforce and ensure duty of care**. Human resources policies will be more responsive to the needs of staff, especially those serving in the field. Improvements to the conditions of service for both national and international staff will be pursued through inter-agency mechanisms. These new and revised policies will support improved conditions of service, including by addressing staff health, well-being, safety and security, especially for national staff and staff serving in field locations;

(d) **Application of knowledge management and learning to create an enabling policy environment**. A well-facilitated global Secretariat human resources community of practice will promote awareness of policy changes, increase collaboration across geographical boundaries and departments, and provide authoritative guidance for more consistent interpretation of policies. A common policy portal will make policies and procedures accessible to all staff members;

(e) **Creation of an enhanced system to improve responsiveness to challenges in the field**. A new quality assurance system for human resources policies will foster continuous interactions with field-based managers and staff and drive continuous improvements to the human resources policy framework. The system will improve the responsiveness of policies to needs in the field by providing qualitative feedback to the two new management departments, the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Department of Operational Support, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/266 B, and the Management Client Board.

B. Proactive talent acquisition and management

Goal: the acquisition, development and retention of a mobile, field-oriented, high-performing, multilingual and diverse workforce

15. Proactive talent management will drive organizational results by ensuring that the global staffing profile continuously evolves to meet strategic and operational needs. The comprehensive approach outlined below will create a diverse, gender-balanced, geographically mobile and multitalented workforce.

16. Strategic actions will include:

(a) **Implementation of strategic workforce planning**. A new corporate approach to strategic workforce planning will be mainstreamed across the Secretariat. It will be reinforced by an Organization-wide inventory of workforce talent that will maintain skills profiles for staff at all levels, organized by knowledge, experience, expertise, competencies and other attributes;

(b) **Accelerated recruitment processes**. A comprehensive approach will speed up recruitment by focusing on three critical points during the process: the initial application phase; the screening and evaluation of candidates; and the provision of recommendations by the hiring manager:

(i) *Applications*. More specific requirements will be written into job openings, reflecting the profile required and the evaluation criteria for assessing applicants, and job design and classification will be standardized and expedited.

In addition, earlier reductions in the posting period have sped up recruitment without affecting the number or diversity of applicants. As such, a further reduction of the period to 30 days is proposed;

(ii) *Screening and evaluation of candidates*. New technologies will be applied for more efficient applicant screening and verification of qualifications. Video-interviewing and streamlined interview reports will shorten recruitment timelines and introduce more consistency in the hiring process;

(iii) *Speeding up selections*. Rosters will be regularly and systematically revitalized and their use will be widely promoted. Real-time data will be used to monitor the timeliness of individual hiring processes. A human resources dashboard will be enhanced to track key recruitment indicators, including on gender parity and geographical distribution. Managers will be held accountable for delegated authority for selections and remedial action will be taken, including surge support when required, to address significant delays;

(c) **Promotion of gender parity**. Gender parity will be pursued as an essential element in proactive talent acquisition and management. Special measures will be taken to recruit, retain and promote qualified women and to increase the applicant pool of female candidates for field positions. Changes to the policy framework will remove obstacles to gender parity. Training will address unconscious bias, and dedicated support, including mentoring, will be provided. Qualified women from the General Service and related categories, including National Professional Officers, will also add to the global talent pool of women professionals and contribute to the objective of achieving gender parity. Gender distribution statistics are provided in annex IV;

(d) **Enhancement of geographical representation**. Every effort will be made to ensure the representation of underrepresented and unrepresented countries, as well as of troop- and police-contributing countries. New initiatives will be designed to encourage candidates from those Member States to apply to specific job openings and to ensure that representation is taken into account by managers when making selection decisions;

(e) **Increased regional diversity**. The Secretary-General is committed to ensuring that the workforce of the United Nations Secretariat is diverse and reflects the population that it serves. The analysis of the regional diversity of the Secretariat as a whole and of individual entities within the Secretariat (see annex III) will be used to develop strategies and serve as a benchmark to monitor progress;

(f) **Design of a new mobility system**. A new system will be designed to promote geographical mobility as an intrinsic element in career development. Standardized tours of duty, including at hardship duty stations, will allow staff members to diversify their skills and experiences. The new system will establish a clear linkage between training, geographical mobility, the need to serve at hardship duty stations and career progression. In line with the Organization's duty of care to its staff, the new system will ensure that staff serving in extreme hardship conditions are reassigned at certain predetermined intervals. In addition, existing reciprocal agreements will be enhanced to facilitate system-wide inter-agency mobility;

(g) **Development and implementation of a new performance management approach**. A redesigned performance management approach will foster a culture of continuous dialogue between managers and staff, promote collaboration and strengthen accountability for results. Practical guidance and support for managers and staff on the new approach will be provided;

(h) **Implementation of 360-degree evaluations for senior management**. 360-degree reviews for Assistant Secretaries-General and Under-Secretaries-General will strengthen performance management and promote adoption of the behaviours required for effective senior leadership. Participants will receive feedback from peers,

as well as from those who report directly and indirectly to them. The system will be expanded later to other categories of senior management;

(i) **Enhanced support for career development**. Measures will be taken to foster meaningful and well-managed career development for national and international staff. Multilingual learning opportunities will support career development and drive workforce transformation. Online and face-to-face opportunities for multilingual skills development and career support will expand, including through a web-based learning library that will be available to Secretariat staff members at all duty stations. Special attention will be provided to promote access to opportunities by persons with disabilities;

(j) **Increased career opportunities for national and General Service staff members**. Staff members in the General Service and related categories, together with National Professional Officers and staff in the Field Service category will form a vital part of a transformed global workforce. New approaches to career development for these staff members will allow the Organization to benefit more from their diverse talents and experiences. The elimination of the additional G-to-P requirements from the young professionals programme will remove a long-standing obstacle to career advancement for staff members in the General Service and related categories;

(k) **Engagement of young people**. Innovative outreach initiatives will be used to engage young people and bring fresh ideas into the Organization. They will draw upon lessons learned from experiences in promoting youth engagement in other United Nations organizations, including the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Volunteers. The young professionals programme will strengthen its focus on attracting young talent from underrepresented and unrepresented Member States;

(l) **Enhanced accountability for workforce transformation**. The Secretary-General will use the senior manager compacts to hold leaders directly accountable for the acquisition, development and retention of an increasingly mobile, field-oriented, gender-balanced and diverse workforce.

C. A transformed organizational culture

Goal: staff well-being and an engaged workforce performing in an enabling work environment

17. The Secretary-General is leading efforts to create a culture that is focused on results, values innovation and better manages risks. To achieve this cultural shift, leadership development efforts will focus on the United Nations system leadership framework (see CEB/2017/1), which calls for an approach to leadership that is norm-based, principled, inclusive, accountable, multidimensional, transformational, collaborative, self-applied, pragmatic and action-oriented.

18. Changing the management culture and leadership in the Secretariat requires an enabling policy environment and effective support and service delivery at every stage of the talent management cycle. Key to this is the operationalization of a revised set of leadership and management competencies, in line with the United Nations system leadership framework and with a focus on observable behaviours.

19. These new leadership and management competencies will encourage integrity, inclusion and respect for diversity and promote commitment to the highest standards of service. Senior management will be required to model the new competencies in their daily work. Feedback from staff through employee engagement surveys, and better application of performance management standards across the Organization,

will help to drive positive changes in behaviour that are visible by staff and management, Member States and other external clients.

20. Strategic actions will include:

(a) **Awareness-raising of managers and staff of standards, policies and accountability frameworks for delegated human resources management**. Interactive communications will be used to foster an Organization-wide dialogue and create a shared understanding regarding personal accountability, responsibility and authority. Potential senior leaders and managers will be assessed during recruitment and selection to determine if they possess the desired leadership and management competencies;

(b) **Roll-out of the new leadership and management competencies framework**. Managers and leaders will have access to learning support and mentoring as they transition to new leadership and management roles within the Organization. They will use online, blended and face-to-face learning approaches to assess their strengths and skill gaps and to obtain the knowledge that they need when they need it;

(c) **Provision of learning resources to foster organizational change**. The online United Nations Global Induction Platform will provide a single-entry point for new staff to understand the new organizational culture, including expectations with respect to leadership and management competencies. New staff members and those transitioning to new posts will use the platform to customize their onboarding experience based on their level, location and management responsibilities. It will be continuously updated to improve the user experience and provide access to additional learning resources;

(d) **Recognition of staff innovation, collaboration, results achievement and managerial excellence**. To reinforce accountability, support career development and encourage innovation, staff innovations and strong performers will be recognized, and interventions will be identified for poor performers. Where efforts to improve performance are not successful, appropriate measures will be taken. Learning support will help senior leaders to become role models and advocates for innovation and more effective performance management;

(e) **Implementation of a holistic approach to duty of care for staff**. The increased risks to the United Nations across the world highlight the importance of the responsibility to strengthen the duty of care, for both national and international staff. Immediate actions will be pursued to ensure that staff members are safe, physically and psychologically, including strengthened oversight of United Nations civilian and military health-care services, the introduction of tele-health services and the development of medical training capability. A five-year strategic action plan to improve mental health in the United Nations workplace will increase access to professional services, including psychological aid in crisis situations. It will promote help-seeking and early intervention, and proactively support recovery and return to work. Support will be provided to staff in the field, including national staff, to develop emotional resilience and manage stress in the workplace. In line with the Organization's commitment to burden-sharing and its duty of care to its staff, the Secretariat will establish necessary contractual instruments and a support structure to ensure that those staff serving at extreme hardship and hazardous duty stations will be reassigned as a matter of course once certain predetermined time limits are met;

(f) **Accelerating action and strengthening leadership to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment in the workplace**. Continued priority will be given to advancing and improving victim-centred policies and measures to achieve the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance vision. These initiatives will drive cultural change and ensure safe and inclusive working environments where sexual misconduct is never tolerated, abusers are held accountable and staff feel safe to report incidents;

(g) **Strengthening of policies and learning support to prevent and respond to corruption, fraud, discrimination and abuse of authority**. New protections against retaliation for reporting misconduct will be created. Mandatory training courses will be used to promote United Nations standards of conduct, including prevention of fraud and corruption;

(h) **Increased staff engagement**. Building on the findings of regular staff engagement surveys, the Organization will continue to develop and implement action plans to increase staff engagement in all facets of the Secretariat's work;

(i) **Strengthened staff-management relations**. Working in collaboration with the Staff-Management Committee, inclusive dialogue will be pursued with staff to provide feedback and ideas to support these strategic actions and contribute to organizational transformation.

21. Across all three components of the strategy, wherever feasible, actions will be designed and delivered as "One United Nations" initiatives and will build on opportunities for system-wide collaboration and synergies provided by the Secretary-General's reform efforts.

III. From strategy to action

A. Change management

22. The strategy is aligned with the Secretary-General's proposals for management reform. The achievement of the goals in the strategy will depend upon the commitment and support of all stakeholders, including Member States, senior leadership, managers and staff at all levels. While many aspects of the strategy build on ongoing efforts, success will also depend upon adequate investment in the proposed initiatives, especially those related to leveraging new technologies and innovations, staff development and learning. The adoption of new skills and behaviours by staff and managers is also a critical factor in realizing the full benefits of these proposed changes.

23. The implementation plan for the strategy (see annex I) aligns strategic actions to specific time frames. Regular consultations with all stakeholders, including field-based entities, will assess the continued validity of the strategy and lead to adjustments to the plan, as required.

B. Monitoring and reporting

24. Monitoring and reporting will be results-based and will consider both expected benefits and implementation risks.

25. Periodic updates on progress will be provided to assess the effectiveness of the strategy, with a view to proposing adjustments as needed. It is recommended that a review of the implementation of the global human resources strategy be submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

IV. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

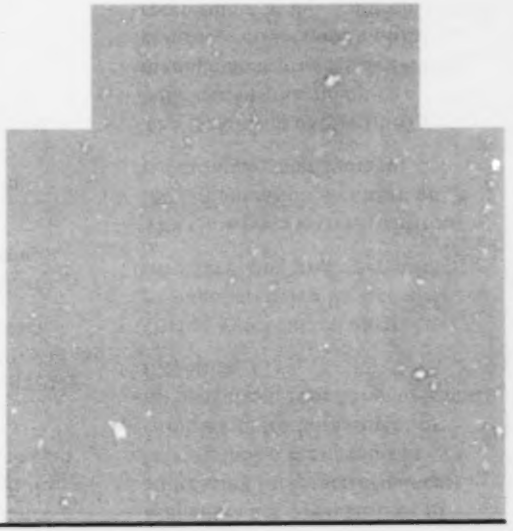
26. The General Assembly is requested to take note of the present report and to request the Secretary-General to submit a review of the implementation of the global human resources strategy at its seventy-fifth session.

Annex I

Implementation plan for the global human resources strategy

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Component A: an enabling policy environment for strategic people management				
Development of a streamlined delegation of authority framework for human resources management				
Simplification and streamlining of human resources policies aligned with the needs in the field				
Review of conditions of service to attract and retain the best talent, sustain a competent, diverse, multilingual and mobile workforce and ensure duty of care				
Application of knowledge management and learning to create an enabling policy environment				
Creation of an enhanced system to improve responsiveness to challenges in the field				
Component B: proactive talent acquisition and management				
Implementation of strategic workforce planning				
Accelerated recruitment processes				
Promotion of gender parity				
Enhancement of geographical representation				
Increased regional diversity				
Design of a new mobility system				
Development and implementation of a new performance management approach				
Implementation of 360-degree evaluations for senior management				
Enhanced support for career development				
Increased career opportunities for national and General Service staff members				
Engagement of young people				
Enhanced accountability for workforce transformation				

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Component C: a transformed organizational culture				
Awareness-raising of managers and staff of standards, policies and accountability frameworks for delegated human resources management				
Roll-out of the new leadership and management competencies framework				
Provision of learning resources to foster organizational change				
Recognition of staff innovation, collaboration, results achievement and managerial excellence				
Implementation of a holistic approach to duty of care for staff				
Accelerating action and strengthening leadership to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment in the workplace				
Strengthening of policies and learning support to prevent and respond to corruption, fraud, discrimination and abuse of authority				
Increased staff engagement				
Strengthened staff-management relations				



Annex II

Summary table of the impact, challenges and lessons learned in the reform of human resources management over the past decade

Reports of the Secretary-General	Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly	Topic	Reform initiatives	Impact	Challenges and lessons learned
A/63/285	63/256	Recruitment and staffing strategy	Establishment of a roster-based approach for the selection of staff	Roster-based recruitment in the field has contributed to a significant reduction in recruitment timelines	Strengthening the capacity to conduct additional rostering exercises for both field and non-field duty stations would contribute to the overall reduction of the recruitment timelines Successful roster-based recruitment requires continuous maintenance and updating of roster data
		Performance management	Linkage between performance management and the implementation of contractual arrangements Mandatory performance management training for all managers with supervisory roles Introduction of e-performance management in Inspira	A strengthened performance appraisal system through the issuance of ST/AI/2010/5 and ST/AI/2010/5/Corr.1 Institutionalization of rigorous and transparent procedures in the review of staff performance A more streamlined performance management system through Inspira Enhanced engagement in mandatory performance management by supervisors	Managers are overcautious in addressing underperformance, fearing that it may result in complaints for harassment or investigation, rebuttal panels and litigation Owing to resource constraints, managers receive limited support for addressing underperformance The slow pace towards shifting the Organization's culture on performance management The lack of an explicit link between various talent management processes, such as contract conversion, mobility, recruitment and promotion, and performance management

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
					The need for staff members and managers to have a greater measure of confidence in the accuracy and reliability of performance evaluations
A/63/592 and A/63/744	64/260	Emergency preparedness and support	Establishment of a dedicated Emergency Preparedness and Support Unit in the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management as an initial and crucial step towards providing and coordinating the provision of essential support to survivors and the families of those who perish or are injured because of a malicious act, natural disaster or other emergency	A holistic and coordinated approach to emergency management. Organizational preparedness and support based on close cooperation with relevant stakeholders, including agencies, funds and programmes. Institutionalization of a comprehensive emergency management framework that includes emergency preparedness and victim support components.	Overall increase of risks and incidents Greater expectations from all stakeholders
A/64/267	Decision 64/546	Contractual arrangements and harmonization of conditions of service	Implementation of continuing appointments	A simplified contractual framework that aligns with the various operational needs of the Organization Continuing appointments have contributed to the development of a truly integrated and global workforce, which has strengthened the ability of the Organization to respond to its evolving and increasingly complex operational needs, while promoting equality of treatment	As the review exercise entails three stages, namely, determination of eligibility, allocation of points and final review, conducted by the Office of Human Resources Management, it takes at least 10 months to complete the exercise As post envelopes for an annual review cannot be determined until the previous review has been concluded and continuing appointments have been granted,

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
				and providing increased job security for Secretariat staff across all duty stations and at all levels, thereby supporting long-term performance and commitment to the Organization	it is challenging from an administrative point of view to bring the annual review up to date Future challenges include the trend towards downsizing and closing field missions, as well as reaching the limits of post envelopes and the possibility of a de facto freeze in the granting of continuing appointments, except for staff who came on board through competitive examinations in accordance with rule 4.16 of the Staff Rules
A/65/305 and A/65/305/Add.3	Resolution 65/247	Talent management tool, Inspira	Implementation of Inspira, the human resources management system	Inspira has integrated human resources processes in recruitment, learning and performance management. For recruitment and the administration of examinations, the system has facilitated the sorting and assessing of large numbers of applications. In 2017, more than 1.2 million applications were received for various career and examination opportunities from nationals of all 193 Member States	The implementation of Inspira is not a one-time deployment exercise because the system requires continuous enhancements to adapt to evolving operational needs, policies and the increasing number of jobs advertised and applications received. Work has begun to integrate Inspira and Umoja to improve the functionalities in recruitment and reporting. This has imposed additional costs and resource implications in terms of both human resources and information technology
		Recruitment and staffing strategy	Elimination of the special procedures for the selection of external candidates from the staff selection system	Equal access to career opportunities for both internal and external job applicants to vacancies in the Secretariat	The absence of special procedures for the selection of external candidates allows heads of entity to fully exercise the delegated authority on staff selection without

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
					central approval for external recruitment. On the other hand, maintaining restrictions for existing staff members, such as on G-to-P movements, have raised concerns regarding unequal treatment
A/65/305/Add.1	Resolution 65/247	Young professionals programme	Introduction of the young professionals programme	A modernized and streamlined examination process that includes an online application and automated screening process through Inspira A shorter examination application period Specialized boards of examiners working on examination development and marking according to the industry standards Increased placement opportunities through the introduction of a broader job network approach to replace specialized job-specific examinations The use of technology for interviews and online examinations A more focused and effective placement approach of successful candidates through the alignment of the number of successful candidates with the number of expected vacancies	A more efficient administration of young professionals programme examinations for smaller job families The three-year roster validity provides a clearly defined expiration dates for the placement of successful young professionals programme candidates. This has resulted in a more effective placement of successful candidates and better management of expectations.

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
			Inclusion in the young professionals programme and limitation to 15 per cent of the positions at the P-1 and P-2 levels in field operations financed through the regular budget and voluntary contributions	Approximately 10 positions in field operations financed through the regular budget and voluntary contributions are available to successful candidates Two positions in special political missions in the field have been utilized to place successful candidates	There are challenges in identifying vacant positions of this specific budget nature in field operations that could be used for the placement of successful candidates Several successful candidates have opted for withdrawing their candidature for placement in positions in hardship locations, such as the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan The placement of candidates in positions financed through voluntary contributions have been avoided over concerns about funding continuity
		Contractual arrangements and harmonization of conditions of service	Establishment of the criteria for identifying posts against which continuing contracts shall be granted, subject to two post envelopes, one for international staff in the Professional and higher categories and in the Field Service category, and one for staff in the General Service and other locally recruited categories	In accordance with paragraphs 51 and 52 of resolution 65/247, the Office of Human Resources Management, in collaboration with the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, sets the post envelopes at 75 per cent of the number of established, temporary and general temporary assistance positions that have been in existence for more than five years Once the post envelopes are established, the number of current continuing and permanent appointments are deducted to determine the number of continuing appointments available for granting within each group in a given year	Following the contractual arrangements comprising three types of appointments (temporary, fixed-term and continuing) approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/250, field mission staff holding a 300-series appointment were transitioned to a fixed-term appointment, which qualified them to be considered for a continuing appointment The contractual reform has given staff serving in the field equal opportunity to compete and be considered for continuing appointments, putting them on par with the rest of the Secretariat

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
			Establishment of criteria for consideration for the granting of continuing contracts	The establishment of criteria for consideration allowed for predictability and equality of treatment The centrally managed review ensures consistency and transparency	There is a need to review and adapt policies periodically to meet the evolving needs of the Organization and its staff. This is now becoming more pressing as the post envelope limit is expected to be reached, to ensure that the long-term operational needs of the Organization continue to be met
A/65/305 and A/66/347	Resolution 66/234	Reporting and data analysis	Introduction of the tool HR Insight	HR Insight dashboard (under United Nations staff information): Member States have convenient online access to monthly Secretariat staffing information, including about their nationals, representation status and forecasted retirements. Previously, this information was available only in Secretary-General reports or on ad hoc request basic. In addition, online posting reduces the need to print thousands of pages (for example, the list of staff of the United Nations Secretariat is now only available online, on HR Insight) HR Insight dashboard (under HR scorecard): making the human resources management scorecard available online allows entities to self-monitor their human resources indicators, including staffing timeline	Publishing human resources information in real time has proved to be a challenge, as not all staff are currently administered through Umoja (e.g. staff administered by the United Nations Development Programme). Another challenge is the effort required to maintain reporting as processes and systems evolve A lesson learned is that, as users become more familiar with reporting, they will tend to request more detailed information

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
A/67/324	Resolution 67/255	Staffing timeline	As a means of improving geographical representation of underrepresented and unrepresented Member States, staff members in the General Service and related categories from a country eligible for participating in the young professionals programme were allowed to apply for participation in the programme (the G-to-N stream)	Of the 578 candidates successful in the young professionals programme examinations from 2011 to 2016, 31 (5.36 per cent) passed the examinations under the G-to-N stream Of those candidates, 24 had been appointed within the programme by the end of 2017, of whom 9 were from underrepresented Member States, according to the geographical representation status valid at the time of the candidates' appointment	The G-to-N stream contributes to the geographical balance while promoting the career development of staff members from the General Service and related categories. However, the career opportunities of those staff members could be broadened if they could move to the Professional category other than through the young professionals programme
A/67/324	Resolution 67/255	Recruitment and staffing strategy	Limiting the young professionals programme to the recruitment at the P-1 and P-2 levels, depending on candidates' qualifications and the availability of posts Continuation of the G-to-N stream under the young professionals programme	Successful candidates are appointed to positions at the P-2 level if they have either a Master's or doctorate degree, or a bachelor's degree with two years of work experience Candidates who do not meet the requirement for appointment at the P-2 level are appointed at the P-1 level. To date, there has only been one such candidate, in 2013	The restriction on the appointment of candidates successful in the young professionals programme has limited the Organization's ability to attract experienced candidates. Many young professionals programme candidates are junior professionals with several years of work experience or academics pursuing doctorate degrees by the time of their appointment Furthermore, the non-prioritization of qualified P-2 staff members for positions at the P-3 level has restricted the number of available P-2 positions and promotion opportunities for P-2 staff members

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
A/67/30 and A/67/30/Corr.1, A/68/30 and A/70/30 (reports of the International Civil Service Commission)	Resolutions 67/257 and 70/244	Retirement age	Increase in retirement age	Harmonization with the global general trend to increase the age of retirement Recognition that longevity has increased significantly and that many staff members continue to be very productive and to have the skills to work well beyond the previous age of retirement Decrease in the use of retirees and retention of staff member beyond the mandatory age of separation In accordance with the report of the International Civil Service Commission (A/68/30, para. 61), raising the mandatory age of separation to 65 for existing staff is expected to enhance the long-term sustainability of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund	Although it is relatively early to make predictions, as the increased mandatory age of separation went into effect in 2014 for new staff and in 2018 for staff who were in service on 1 January 2014, there are concerns arising from the aforementioned freeze in the granting of continuing appointments. If more staff members holding continuing and permanent appointments opt to work to the age of 65, there will be fewer retirements that will free up posts in the envelope
	Resolution 67/255	Flexible working arrangements	Introducing more flexibility in the way managers and staff deliver their work and promoting work-life balance	Coupled with the introduction of flexible work space, the Organization is seeing a gradual cultural shift in the way staff members deliver their work, as evidenced in the steady increase in the utilization of flexible work arrangements	The lack of a single tool to record requests and approvals for flexible work arrangements within the Secretariat is an impediment to both the administration of those arrangements and greater transparency and consistency in the way the policy is implemented
	Resolution 67/255 (para. 21)	Revision of different programmes for global access and cost-effective	Introduction of the United Nations Global Induction Platform	Standardization of the Secretariat's induction programmes for newcomers and staff changing duty stations The electronic availability and access to information and	The revision of different programmes needs to be ongoing to reflect the changing priorities of the Organization, its reform and the evolving roles of staff

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
		delivery of e-learning		guidance related to the roles and functions, even ahead of a staff member's first day in a duty station, have allowed for a smoother transition of incoming staff and staff changing duty stations	
			Increased access to career counselling services	Face-to-face career counselling sessions were replaced with online sessions, which provided increased access to services that had previously been unavailable to staff in remote locations	
		Sabbatical leave programme	Review of the sabbatical leave programme policy to allow more staff to participate	The review of the sabbatical leave programme showed that staff valued the opportunity to engage in dedicated research more than any other aspect of the programme The updated policy allows for more staff to be selected each year, while reducing the Organization's expenses	While the programme has been successful and received praise on its benefits to the participants, it still has room for added value to the Organization. Various ways could be explored on how to use the reports produced by participants to fill research needs of the Organization in connection with topics on its agenda
A/68/358	Resolution 68/265	Recruitment and staffing strategy	Introduction of a managed career development and mobility framework	The framework was implemented in 2016 and 2017 for two job networks (the Political, Peace and Humanitarian Network and the Information and Telecommunication Technology Network) and resulted in a limited number of placements	A multifaceted approach to mobility is needed A culture of mobility needs to be established across the Secretariat Mobility initiatives in the Secretariat need to be resourced to be successful

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
				The General Assembly approved the mobility framework in its resolution 68/265, with the request that a comprehensive review of the framework be undertaken, for consideration at its seventy-third session	A mobility framework for the Secretariat should encourage increased movement in and out of difficult duty stations A mobility framework for the Secretariat needs to be based on delegation of authority to departments and offices, with the support of centralized policies Mobility must become an integral part of career development The internal mobility programmes used by several United Nations common system organizations are not viable if vacant positions need to be advertised externally Mobility in the Secretariat should be built into succession planning, with a focus on developing junior to mid-level staff for future roles A system of incentives is necessary to encourage mobility Mobility should be part of an integrated talent management strategy
A/71/323 and A/71/323/Add.1	Resolution 71/263	Recruitment and staffing strategy	The reduction of the standard posting period for position-specific job openings from 60 to 30 days for the Professional and higher categories	The overall recruitment timelines for job openings posted for 45 days was 34 days shorter than those advertised for 60 days	The 45-day posting period pilot, which began in 2017, showed that a shorter posting period resulted in shorter recruitment timelines without compromising the overall number of applicants or the number of applicants from developing Member States

Reports of the Secretary-General	*Resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly*	*Topic*	*Reform initiatives*	*Impact*	*Challenges and lessons learned*
		Performance management	Implementation of a more refined performance management framework throughout the Organization, in particular at the managerial and leadership levels, supported by adequate training and guidance	Enhanced communication and outreach efforts to all staff and managers on the importance of the timely completion of workplans and appraisals have led to a steady increase in e-performance compliance rates	While compliance with e-performance requirements and deadlines has increased, managers need to deliver more in terms of active performance management, including by giving ongoing feedback to staff about their performance and by addressing underperformance promptly Senior managers need to be stronger role models in terms of providing feedback, addressing underperformance and ensuring ratings calibration

Annex III

Regional diversity analysis

1. The Secretary General considers that human resources management policies must contribute proactively to greater regional diversity within the workforce (see A/72/492, para. 24). He has included an indicator of regional diversity in the Senior Managers Compacts to measure progress from one year to the next towards achieving greater regional diversity. The regional groups are Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and Western Europe and others.[1]

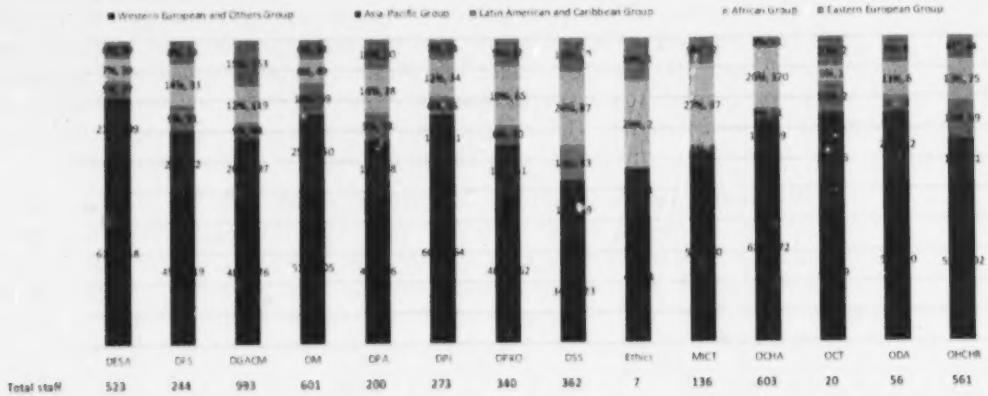
2. Heads of departments, offices and missions are encouraged to improve regional diversity by increasing efforts to recruit staff from the regions that have fewer international staff within their entities. Within those regions, the focus is on those countries that are underrepresented and unrepresented, in particular when vacant posts are subject to the system of desirable ranges. Similarly, ensuring proper representation of troop-police contributing countries will also remain a priority.

3. An analysis of the status of regional diversity in the Secretariat has been conducted. Figures I and II below show the composition of staff by regional group and entity as at 31 December 2017, for those entities with Senior Managers Compacts. Those data will serve as a benchmark to monitor progress. As part of the annual assessment of compact implementation, heads of entities will be expected to report on the efforts that they have taken to achieve greater regional diversity.

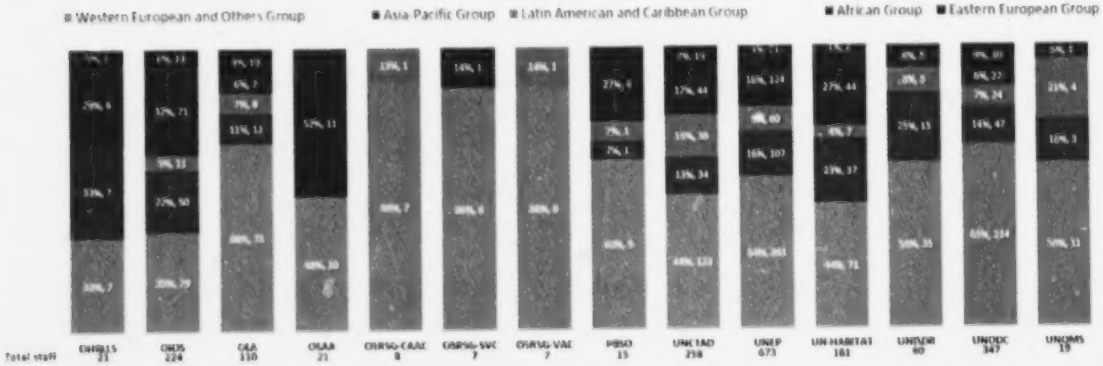
[1] See www.un.org/depts/DGACM/RegionalGroups.shtml.

Figure I

Percentage and number of United Nations Secretariat international staff as at 31 December 2017 by regional group[2] for departments and offices

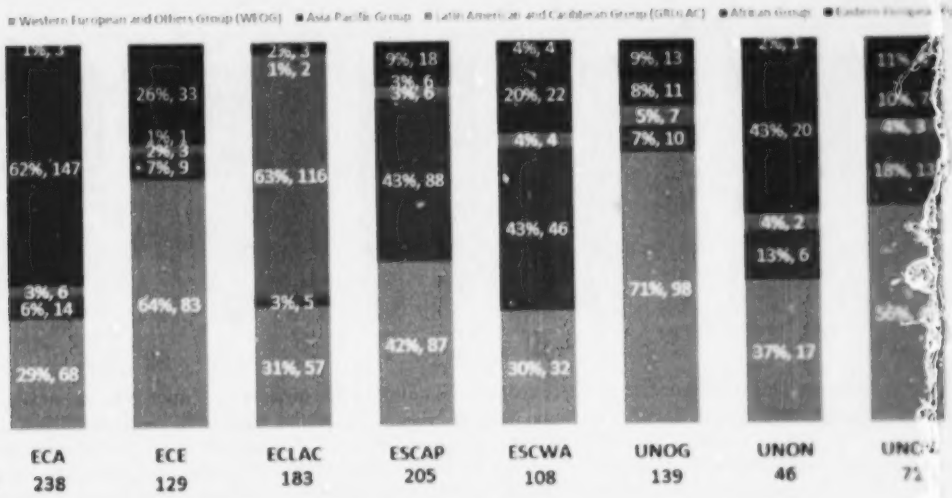


Abbreviations: DESA, Department of Economic and Social Affairs; DFS, Department of Field Support; DGACM, Department for General Assembly and Conference Management; DM, Department of Management; DPA, Department of Political Affairs; DPI, Department of Public Information; DPKO, Department of Peacekeeping Operations; DSS, Department of Safety and Security; Ethics, Ethics Office, MICT, International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals; OCHA, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; OCT, Office of Counter-Terrorism; ODA, Office for Disarmament Affairs; OHCHR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.



Abbreviations: OHRLLS, Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States; OIOS, Office of Internal Oversight Services; OLA, Office of Legal Affairs; OSAA, Office of the Special Adviser on Africa; OSRSG-CAAC, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict; OSRSG-SVC, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; OSRSG-VAC, Office the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children; PBSO, Peacebuilding Support Office; UNCTAD, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; UN-Habitat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme; UNISDR, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction; UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; UNOMS, Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services.

[2] For a list of members in each regional group used for electoral purposes, see www.un.org/depts/DGACM/RegionalGroups.shtml. The graphs include all international staff (Field Service, Professional and above) with permanent, continuing or fixed-term appointments. Staff with temporary appointments or staff from non-Member States are not included. All funding sources are also included. Entities are categorized according to the organizational structure in Umoja. Only entities with Senior Managers Compacts are shown.

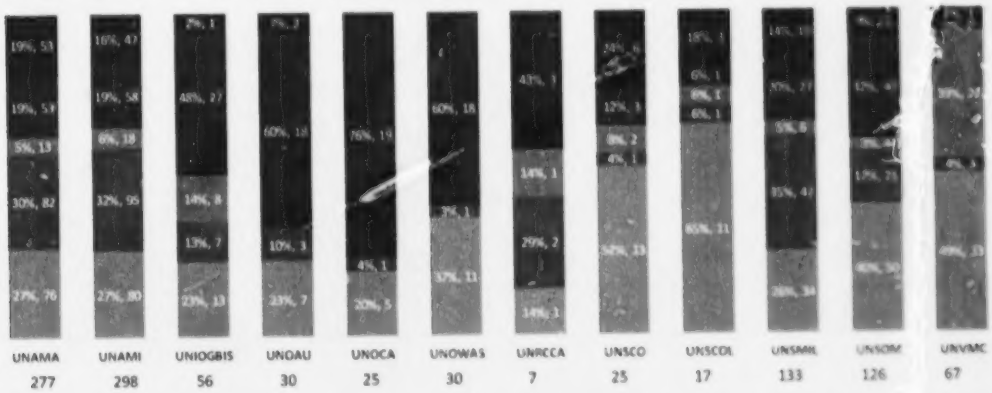


Source: Demographic data gathered from Umoja or provided directly by United Nations entities.

Abbreviations: ECA, Economic Commission for Africa; ECE, Economic Commission for Europe; ECLAC, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; ESCAP, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; ESCWA, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; UNOG, United Nations Office at Geneva; UNON, United Nations Office at Nairobi; UNOV, United Nations Office at Vienna.

Figure II

Percentage and number of United Nations Secretariat international staff as at 31 December 2017 by regional group[3] for missions



Abbreviations: UNAMA, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan; UNAMI, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq; UNIOGBIS, United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau; UNOAU, United Nations Office to the African Union; UNOCA, United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa; UNOWAS, United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel; UNRCCA, United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia; UNSCO, Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority; UNSCOL, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon; UNSMIL, United Nations Support Mission in Libya; UNSOM, United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia; UNVMC, United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

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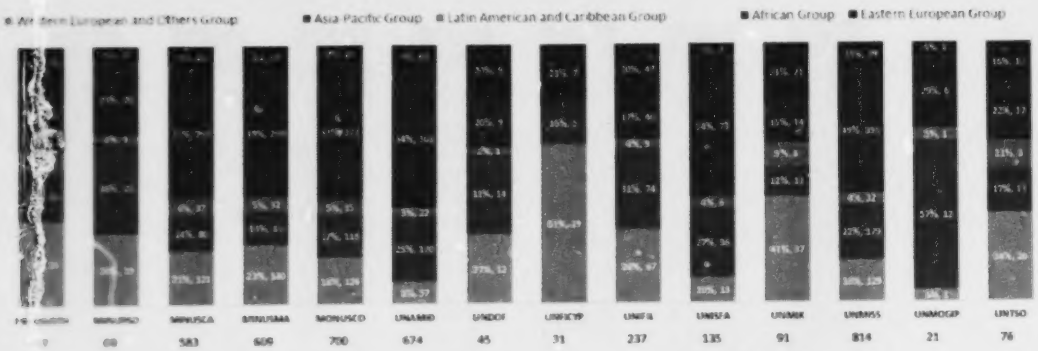


Source: Demographic data gathered from Umoja or provided directly by United Nations entities.

Abbreviations: MINUJUSTH, United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti; MINURSO, United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara; MINUSCA, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic; MINUSMA, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali; MONUSCO, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; UNAMID, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; UNDOF, United Nations Disengagement Observer Force; UNFICYP, United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus; UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon; UNISFA, United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei; UNMIK, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; UNMISS, United Nations Mission in South Sudan; UNMOGIP, United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan; UNTSO, United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.

Annex IV

Gender distribution analysis

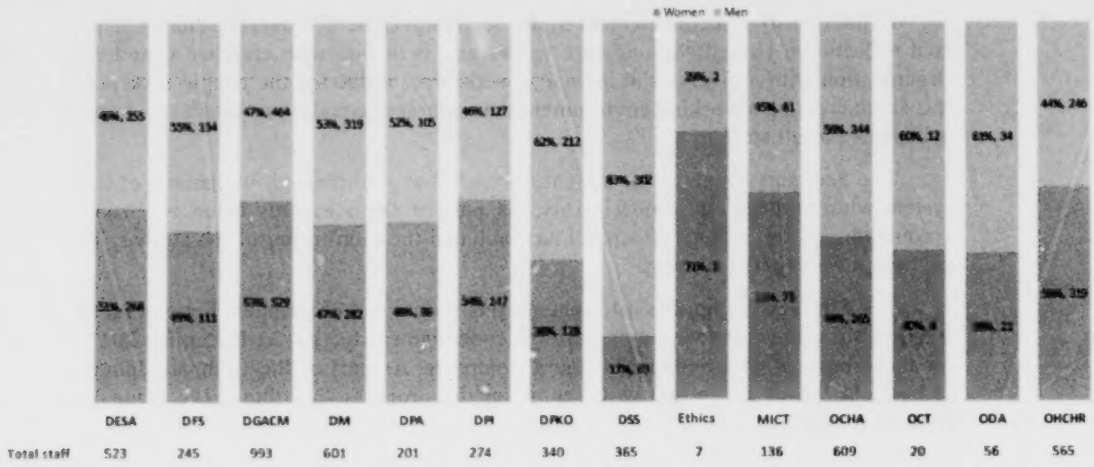
1. Gender parity is a core element of the Secretary-General's overall reforms. This goal reflects the United Nations core values and is in line with creating a modern Organization with a diverse and inclusive workforce, reflecting the people it serves. It is about creating a working environment that embraces equality, eradicates bias and is inclusive of all staff.

2. The Secretary-General has sought to reach that goal through the launch of the system-wide strategy on gender parity. As part of the measures taken to ensure accountability, the Secretary-General has included the monitoring of the strategy in the Senior Managers Compacts.

3. The Strategy recognizes different starting points and challenges. Figures I and II below show the composition of staff by gender and entity as at 31 December 2017, for those entities with Senior Managers Compacts. As part of the Compact annual assessment, heads of entities will report on the progress that they have made to achieve gender parity.

Figure I

Percentage and number of United Nations Secretariat international staff[1] as at 31 December 2017 by gender for departments and offices



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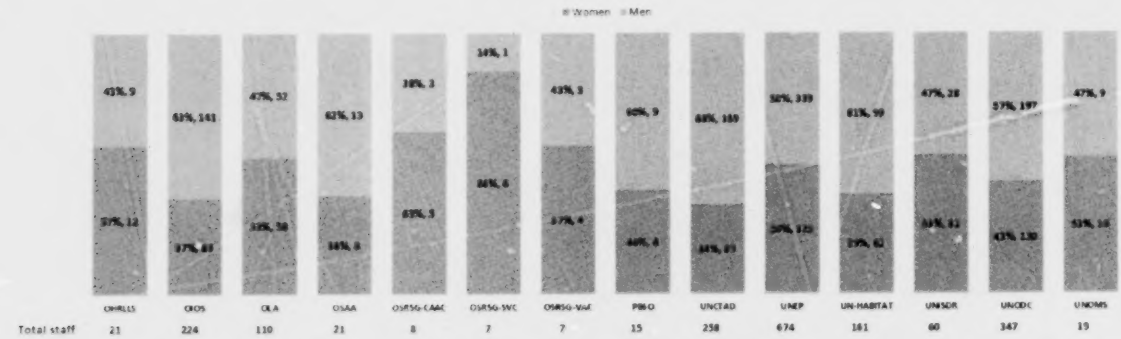

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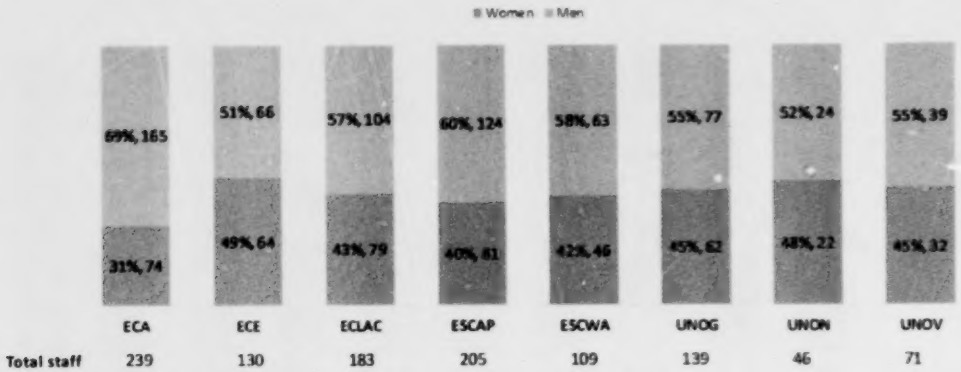

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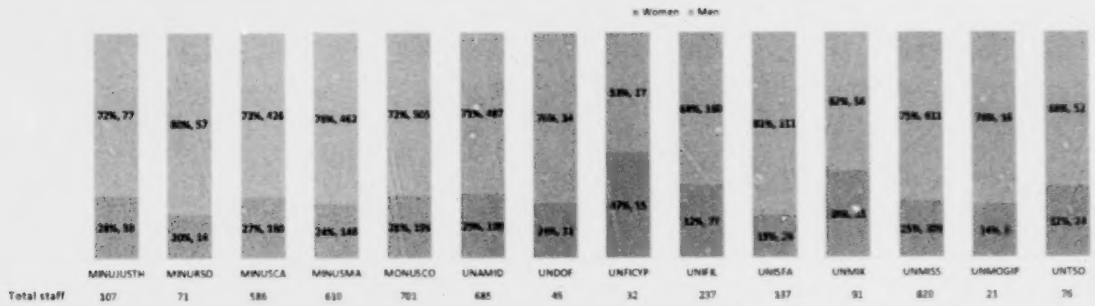
Figure II

Percentage and number of United Nations Secretariat international staff[2] as at 31 December 2017 by gender for missions



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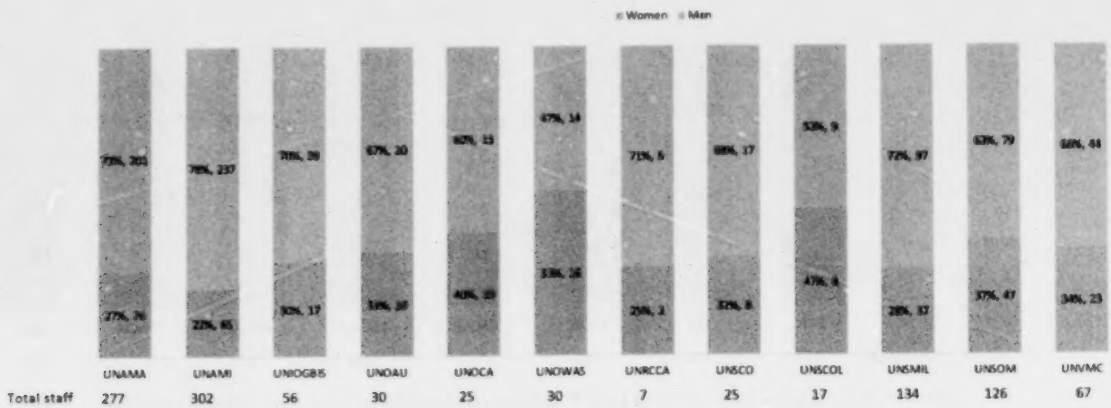

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United Nations A/73/372/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
12 September 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 142 of the provisional agenda*
Human resources management

Overview of human resources management reform for the period 2017–2018

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an update on achievements in modernizing and streamlining the Organization's human resources management functions since the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. It provides details of efforts under way to support the Secretary-General's management reform agenda and responds to General Assembly resolutions 65/247 and 71/263.

The General Assembly is invited to take note of the report and to approve the recommendations contained herein.

* A/73/150.

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I. Introduction

1. The Secretariat continues to implement human resources reform initiatives to build a strong and forward-looking Organization that thrives in a challenging and fast-changing environment. Ongoing reform of the human resources function is a key part of the Secretary-General's vision. While continuous progress has been made since the seventy-first session, much work remains to be done.

2. The present report outlines the progress made since the seventy-first session, including updates requested by the General Assembly. In section II.A, an update is provided on the simplification and streamlining of rules and policies and on changes in the conditions of service. Also described are achievements in protecting staff members from retaliation for reporting misconduct, and efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and sexual harassment are highlighted.

3. The Secretariat has made progress in talent management, including workforce planning, faster recruitment and the engagement of young people. It has reviewed performance management processes and learning offerings in order to link learning, performance and staff career development. Direct feedback on progress has been collected from staff across the Organization through a new staff survey. Progress in these areas is outlined in sections II.B to D.

4. Details are provided on staff health and well-being, including occupational safety and health and health care for staff in field duty stations (section II.E). Progress made in improving access to staff counselling and the management of sick leave is described, and the system-wide mental health strategy, which has been developed under the leadership of the Secretary-General, is outlined.

II. Progress in the implementation of human resources management reform initiatives in the period 2017–2018

A. Policies and conditions of service

1. Simplification and streamlining of the policy framework

5. The Secretariat initiated the first ever comprehensive review of the Organization's policy framework, engaging in partnerships with the United Nations funds and programmes. The revised framework, when fully complete, will provide simplified and streamlined policies for the strategic management of human resources.

6. The streamlined policy framework is a key element of the Secretary-General's vision to shift the management paradigm in the United Nations. It will support increased delegation of authority and enhanced managerial accountability across the Organization.

7. It is the first time since 1947 that the complete set of Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations has been comprehensively reviewed. The text has been reorganized in a more logical manner, simplified, modified to be gender neutral and modernized to be more user friendly and easier to understand. The corresponding amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules have been submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly (see A/73/378).

8. It is also the first time that all internal policies have been examined in a holistic manner. More than 500 administrative issuances have been reviewed. Newly developed or revised human resources policies will place the people, the greatest asset of the Organization, at the centre. They will support a results-based and high-performing workforce, strengthen the welfare of staff and reflect the special

requirements of service in the field. They will also support managers in the exercise of their functions, building upon the specific needs of the Secretariat, as well as good practices from the funds and programmes.

9. As at July 2018, more than 200 administrative instructions had been abolished, simplified, updated or newly developed. By 2019, a new online policy platform will be launched to support managers in exercising their increased delegation of authority and to provide staff members with the necessary information.

2. Protection against retaliation

10. In January 2017, a new policy was issued on protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with audits or investigations (ST/SGB/2017/2). The policy is a key anti-corruption measure that helps to prevent prohibited conduct, such as sexual misconduct. It serves as an internal accountability mechanism by encouraging whistle-blowers to report potential wrongdoing.

11. Key improvements in the policy include: (a) the ability of the Ethics Office to recommend preventive protective measures upon referral from the Office of Internal Oversight Services; (b) the ability of staff members who, in the interests of the Organization, report wrongdoing to request protection from retaliation from not only other staff but also any individual; (c) the establishment of a preliminary review period of 30 days upon the receipt of all documentation; (d) the right of complainants to seek the review of determinations by the Ethics Office after the preliminary review and to challenge an administrative decision based on a final recommendation of the Office; and (e) the notification of complainants with respect to disciplinary measures taken against staff members found to have retaliated against them.

12. Management and staff monitored the implementation of the policy, and, following collaborative efforts, the policy was further revised to reflect lessons learned and best practices in both public and private organizations. A new revised version (ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1) was issued in November 2017, including stronger provisions to protect whistle-blowers and the extension of the policy to include individual contractors and consultants.

3. Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and prevention of sexual harassment

(a) Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse

13. The Secretary-General is fully committed to preventing all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. To enforce the Secretariat's zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse, a broad set of measures has been introduced as follows:

(a) Senior managers across the system are now required to certify annually, to their governing bodies, that they have fully and accurately reported all credible allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse related to United Nations staff members and affiliated personnel serving in their organization, and that they have made training on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse available to staff and affiliated personnel;

(b) A mandatory e-learning training programme entitled "Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel" has been introduced for all personnel;

(c) New screening questions and a new special notice on sexual exploitation and abuse have been incorporated into all job applications, job openings and offer letters;

(d) All staff have to attest to their awareness of the Organization's policies on sexual exploitation and abuse and protection from retaliation when reporting allegations of such misconduct.

(b) Prevention of sexual harassment

14. The Secretary-General has led efforts in the Secretariat and across the United Nations system to ensure zero tolerance for sexual harassment in the workplace, including:

(a) The creation of a rapid response team of senior managers to improve guidance, information and services for Secretariat staff. At the United Nations common system level, the Secretary-General has established a senior-level task force within the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, led by the Under-Secretary-General for Management in her capacity as Chair of the High-level Committee on Management, to strengthen and harmonize prevention and response across all organizations of the United Nations common system;

(b) The launch of an intranet site dedicated to addressing sexual harassment that provides staff members with information on reporting mechanisms and services;

(c) The establishment of a 24-hour helpline for staff to access information and confidential support on reporting mechanisms and medical, security and psychosocial services;

(d) The updating of mandatory training on sexual harassment;

(e) The convening of a joint staff-management working group to strengthen the policy on the prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority;

(f) The strengthening of investigation capacity to streamline and fast track investigations, and the hiring of additional investigators, including female investigators and investigators specialized in sexual harassment investigations;

(g) The development of a staff survey aimed at improving the understanding of the perspectives of staff on the prevalence, nature and experience of sexual harassment. The results of the survey will facilitate and strengthen the Organization's ability to respond effectively and quickly to allegations of sexual harassment;

(h) The deployment of a searchable electronic database for use by the entire United Nations system to enable the systematic tracking of both sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment complaints and to enhance reporting;

(i) The launch of a centralized, system-wide screening application for use by the entire United Nations system to enable human resources professionals to vet candidates to prevent perpetrators of sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse from being rehired.

4. Common system collaboration on job classification and reference checks

15. The Secretariat is leading an innovative system-wide effort to streamline and standardize the way in which jobs are classified and references are checked in the United Nations common system. Together with a number of agencies, funds and programmes, the Secretariat is coordinating a new approach whereby these services will be delivered through a virtual network of human resources specialists working under the umbrella of the common system. This inter-agency partnership will produce synergies and efficiencies across the system, while at the same time harmonizing the way in which United Nations organizations carry out these important human resources functions.

16. This is the first time that the Secretariat has expanded these common services across organizational boundaries. Such an expansion has been enabled through the system-wide use of the Secretariat's talent management platform, Inspira. In addition to making Inspira available to the United Nations common system for these services, several organizations are considering adopting Inspira as their talent management platform, which will further increase the benefits of collaboration, including through shared databases and the standardization of processes.

5. Earnings limit for retirees

17. In 1996, the General Assembly set the maximum earnings for retired former staff in receipt of pension benefits other than former language services staff members at $22,000 and established a maximum limit for language staff members at 125 workdays per year.

18. The limit of $22,000 was set on the basis of a maximum of six months at the midpoint of the gross salary for the Professional and higher categories (e.g., for P-4, step VI), and, unlike the limit set for language staff, it has remained unchanged in more than 20 years.

19. An analysis of the current earnings limit shows that, at P-4, step VI, the amount of $22,000 has been eroded down to the equivalent of 2.6 months of gross salary, less than half the maximum of six months approved by the General Assembly in 1996. For former retired staff members who separate at higher grade levels, ranging from the P-5 to the D-2 levels, the current limit restricts even further the possible duration of their engagement in any given calendar year.

20. The Secretariat needs the flexibility to rapidly hire highly skilled individuals with expertise and knowledge of the Organization's processes, systems and mandates. This is especially important for field operations at the time of start-up, surges and emergency humanitarian crises. Furthermore, the hiring of retired staff members for temporary needs and for a limited period has no impact on the career progression of staff members, as all available long-term positions have to be filled through the established recruitment process. It is also without additional financial cost to the Organization, as the temporary filling of these positions incurs the same expenses regardless of whether the candidate selected is a retiree.

21. In view of the above, the Secretary-General proposes that the General Assembly set the earnings limit for retired staff members in receipt of pension benefits other than retired language services staff members at the monetary equivalent of six months of salary at the midpoint of the salary scale (P-4, step VI). This approach would maintain the previously approved conditions and bring the maximum threshold in line with increases in the cost of living. In addition, this approach would yield a more equitable arrangement than that achieved through the establishment of a fixed global monetary amount. This would provide the Organization with the flexibility required to access a pool of qualified, readily available and deployable candidates for temporary needs.

6. Permanent resident status

22. In 1953, the Fifth Committee decided that the practice of requiring staff members in the Professional and higher categories to renounce permanent resident status in a country other than their country of nationality, to ensure equitable geographical distribution, should be given effect "through appropriate amendments to the Staff Rules". Although no such amendment was ever issued, the practice continued to be implemented.

23. In 2013, the United Nations Appeals Tribunal determined that there was no legal basis for such a practice. It could not be justified on the basis of ensuring the geographical distribution of staff members as geographical status is determined with reference to the staff member's recognized nationality, not their permanent resident status. Since the pronouncement by the Tribunal, new staff members have not been required to renounce their permanent resident status.

24. Serving staff who intend to acquire permanent resident status in any country other than that of their nationality are required to notify the Secretary-General before the change in resident status becomes final. The acquisition or retention of permanent resident status in the United States of America includes a further procedural step, whereby staff members are required to sign a waiver of the rights, privileges, exemptions and immunities that would accrue to them as international staff members. Staff members must request the permission of the Organization to sign the waiver. New staff members who have been allowed to retain their resident status have also been exceptionally granted permission to sign the waiver.

25. Staff members who have been exceptionally granted permission to retain or acquire permanent resident status have been informed that, following consideration by the General Assembly of this issue, they may be required to renounce their permanent resident status as a condition of any extension, renewal or other form of subsequent appointment within the Organization.

26. The Secretary-General is of the view that the practice of asking staff members to renounce their permanent resident status upon joining the Organization merits reconsideration for the following reasons. First, an increasing number of staff members serve at non-family duty stations while their families reside in the country of the spouse and not in the country of the staff member. Second, since the contractual reforms, a higher number of staff are serving on fixed-term appointments, which carry no expectation of renewal. It would therefore be unreasonable to expect prospective staff members to renounce their permanent resident status at the time of signing a one-year letter of appointment without any guarantee of further employment with the Organization.

27. Accordingly, the Secretary-General requests the General Assembly to approve the abolition of the requirement that staff members renounce their permanent resident status in a country other than the country of their nationality, on the basis of which the appropriate amendments to the Staff Rules would be prepared.

7. Contractual arrangements: update on the implementation of the continuing appointment

28. In response to General Assembly resolution 65/247, since 2012, the Secretariat has granted 3,532 continuing appointments to staff in the Professional and higher categories and the Field Service category and 804 to staff in the General Service and related categories (see table 1).

Table 1
Annual continuing appointments review (2012 and 2013)

Category	*Number of staff members reviewed*	*Number of continuing appointments available for award*	*Number of continuing appointments awarded*
Professional and higher categories and Field Service category	5 718	5 002	3 532
General Service and related categories	1 785	802	804

29. The Secretariat is currently conducting the 2014 review of the granting of continuing appointments on the basis of criteria established by the General Assembly. Table 2 shows the number of eligible staff members under review and the number of posts to be awarded.

Table 2
Annual continuing appointments review (2014)

Category	*Number of staff members under review*	*Number of continuing appointments available for award*	*Number of continuing appointments to be awarded*
Professional and higher categories and Field Service category	2 494	1 297	Under determination
General Service and related categories	847	437	Under determination

c. Conditions of service

(a) Field Service category

30. The Secretary-General has moved forward with the implementation of the new criteria for the use of the Field Service category, as recommended by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) in its annual report (see A/72/30, annex III) and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/255.

31. Implementation includes a review of equivalencies and classification standards of the Field Service category in order to grade positions on the basis of the General Service and Professional job classification standards. Doing so will provide greater consistency and equity across positions in various categories and in turn facilitate the potential movement of staff across categories. This entails liaising closely with the field on the process for the implementation of the revised Field Service category. An internal policy on the use of the different staff categories is also under development in order to provide clarity and ensure the consistent use of all categories of staff across the Secretariat, including the Field Service category, which may be used in peacekeeping operations, special political missions, peacebuilding operations, humanitarian operations and emergency operations.

(b) National Professional Officers

32. In its resolution 72/255, the General Assembly endorsed the new guidelines for the employment of National Professional Officers, as recommended by ICSC in its annual report (see A/72/30, annex II). The guidelines notably recall the requirement to preserve the universal character of the organizations of the United Nations common system embedded in the Charter of the United Nations and call for the employment of National Professional Officers to be in accordance with the mandates of organizations, taking into account their operational needs.

33. The Secretary-General has prepared for the consideration of the General Assembly the required amendments to the Staff Rules that will allow the Secretariat and the separately administered funds and programmes of the United Nations system to avail themselves of the new guidelines (see A/73/378).

34. Relevant internal policies on recruitment and employment are also under revision, and new ones are under development, to ensure the proper use of the National Professional Officer category across the Secretariat, in line with the newly endorsed criteria. This entails liaising closely with the field and ensuring that practical summary guidance is issued on the use of the different staff categories, including the National Professional Officer category.

(c) Duty stations with extreme hardship conditions

35. The Secretariat, together with other field-based organizations, has advocated with ICSC for better conditions of service for staff serving in hardship locations. This includes the payment of a non-family service allowance at D and E duty stations where the extreme hardship conditions and absence of basic necessities of life prevent the internationally recruited staff from bringing their family members, but where security considerations do not trigger a non-family designation.

36. The Secretary-General welcomes the recommendation of ICSC on this matter. Subject to its approval by the General Assembly, this would allow the Secretariat (and other common system organizations) to offer a choice to staff members serving at D and E hardship duty stations without family restrictions as to whether to install their families at those duty stations, with an allowance set at 75 per cent of the non-family service allowance to be paid annually to those who opt not to install their dependants.

(d) Introduction of an end-of-service grant

37. The Secretariat has worked in partnership with other common system organizations to establish an end-of-service grant for staff who are separated upon the expiration of their appointment even after serving for many years, sometimes decades. This is particularly acute in the case of locally recruited staff (General Service staff and National Professional Officers) who cannot be laterally reassigned outside of their duty station to other activities of the Organization.

38. The Secretary-General welcomes the recommendation of ICSC on this matter. Subject to its approval by the General Assembly, this would allow staff members holding fixed-term appointments who are involuntarily separated from service on the expiration date of their appointment and who do not receive a termination indemnity to receive an end-of-service grant.

B. Talent management

1. Strategic workforce planning

39. Strategic workforce planning is a key component of human resources management and a fundamental aspect of the Secretariat's human resources strategy. The Secretariat is implementing a corporate approach to workforce planning that can be adapted to an increasingly decentralized management approach. Given the complex and diverse needs across the Secretariat, the approach can be tailored by each department or office so that their unique needs and staffing requirements can be considered.

40. Following the development of a five-step workforce planning methodology, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of human resources management reform: towards a global, dynamic, adaptable and engaged workforce for the United Nations (A/71/323), the Secretariat drafted a training guide on workforce planning, which has been used in recent exercises conducted by the Department of Safety and Security and the Office of Legal Affairs. Other workforce planning efforts by the Secretariat are described in annex I.

(a) Civilian staffing reviews

41. Civilian staffing reviews are an integral part of workforce planning. The reviews build upon the observations and recommendations of the entity strategic reviews and examine capacity, structure, the use of locally recruited staff (including both General

Service staff and National Professional Officers), outsourcing opportunities and cooperation with the United Nations country teams. Reviews have been thus far been completed for all peacekeeping missions, the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, the Global Service Centre in Brindisi, Italy, and the United Nations Office to the African Union.

42. Lessons learned from previous civilian staffing reviews are being used to identify internal and external factors that drive staffing trends. To evaluate the efficacy of civilian staffing reviews, an after-action review was conducted. It was concluded that the reviews are a useful mechanism for assessing civilian staffing in missions, and recommendations were made on the planning, structure and methodology of the reviews.

43. In this context, guidelines on the use of locally recruited staff were developed with a view to promoting the use of National Professional Officers and General Service staff in the workforce. Missions have received a first version of the guidelines, which are being revised to adequately reflect the legislative framework recommended by ICSC, as adopted by the General Assembly, together with feedback received from stakeholders in the field and at Headquarters. These guidelines will provide an overarching framework, principles and tools to support the use and career development of such staff.

(b) Mission-wide job classification exercise

44. As reported in the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (see A/71/809, paras. 98–101), a project was undertaken across peacekeeping operations and special political missions to classify approximately 19,000 unclassified posts. As a result, a library of approximately 1,000 generic job descriptions in both working languages of the Organization was created to facilitate the classification of posts with the same job description, level and title across different missions. The project has concluded, and missions have implemented the results.

45. The classification project has been an effective enabler for workforce planning by:

(a) Creating classified job descriptions for positions in conjunction with proponent offices, which helps in defining the skills, knowledge and competencies needed to identify talent demand and evaluate workforce supply across the Organization;

(b) Assisting in recruitment planning, the preparation of workplans and performance evaluations;

(c) Expediting submissions of staffing requirements for the budget review process and recruitment by using the standard job descriptions for jobs that need to be established or changed;

(d) Aligning organizational charts across various missions;

(e) Guiding the establishment of reporting lines in line with the principles of organization design and nomenclature;

(f) Enhancing transparency and consistency in aligning job responsibilities and classified levels.

(c) Analysis of staff demographic trends

46. The General Assembly requested an analysis of demographic trends, in particular the increase in the average age of Secretariat staff. In this context, the

Secretariat analysed the trends in the age of staff from 30 June 2013 to 31 December 2017 across a range of variables, including entity, category and gender. In addition, to see the impact of age in the future, retirements were forecast by job code (job network, job family, title and grade) over the next 10 years (1 January 2018 to 31 December 2027).

47. While the average age in the Secretariat has risen marginally, from 43.4 years on 30 June 2013 to 45.1 years on 31 December 2017, an upward movement of 1.7 years (0.8 per cent per year), the analysis shows that this increase is the result mainly of the reduction of staff by certain missions, where serving staff tended to be younger (see table 3).

48. The average age in the Secretariat can be expected to continue to increase given the increase in the mandatory retirement age. In addition, the forecast of retirements (see table 4) shows no job network with a significant number of retirements. Further staff demographics trend analysis on age can be found in annex II.

Table 3
Average age of staff of the Secretariat by entity group

	30 June 2013		*31 December 2017*		*Change from 30 June 2013 to 31 December 2017*		
Entity group	*Number of staff*	*Average age of staff*	*Number of staff*	*Average age of staff*	*Number of staff*	*Average age of staff*	*Annual percentage change in average age of staff*
Non-field operations							
Departments/offices	16 267	44.2	17 005	45.2	738	1	0.5
Regional commissions	2 597	44.6	2 281	46	(316)	1.4	0.6
Tribunals	1 252	44.1	616	46.2	(636)	2.1	1.0
Subtotal, non-field operations	**20 116**	**44.3**	**19 902**	**45.3**	**(214)**	**1**	**0.5**
Field operations							
MINUSTAH, MONUSCO, UNAMA, UNAMID, UNMIL and UNOCI	13 996	42.2	7 700	45.4	(6 296)	3.2	1.5
Other missions	7 161	43.1	10 503	44.4	3 342	1.7	0.6
Subtotal, field operations	**21 157**	**42.5**	**18 203**	**44.8**	**(2 954)**	**2.3**	**1.1**
Total	**41 273**	**43.4**	**38 105**	**45.1**	**(3 168)**	**1.7**	**0.8**

Note: Demographic data from Umoja and the Integrated Management Information System or provided directly by United Nations entities. For a list of entities in entity groups, see the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics (A/73/79).

Abbreviations: MINUSTAH, United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti; MONUSCO, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; UNAMA, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan; UNAMID, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; UNMIL, United Nations Mission in Liberia; UNOCI, United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

Table 4

Forecast of retirements from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2027 by job network for all staff of the Secretariat as at 31 December 2017

(Population: 35,109[a])

Job network	*Number of staff in job network*	*Average yearly number of staff retirements 2018–2027 (if all retire at 65)*	*Average yearly retirements as a percentage of staff in job network*
DEVNET	3 494	61.2	1.75
INFONET	3 794	81.1	2.14
ITECNET	2 284	31.8	1.39
LEGALNET	570	8.4	1.47
LOGNET	6 823	110.3	1.62
MAGNET	7 407	121.7	1.64
POLNET	3 899	55.3	1.42
SAFETYNET	4 412	48.8	1.11
SCINET	306	6.6	2.16
Other[b]	2 120	30.1	1.42
Total	**35 109**	**555.3**	**1.58**

Note: Forecast is based on the new mandatory age of separation of staff at 65 years.

Abbreviations: DEVNET, Economic, Social and Development Network; INFONET, Public Information and Conference Management Network; ITECNET, Information and Telecommunication Technology Network; LEGALNET, Legal Network; LOGNET, Logistics, Transportation and Supply Chain Network; MAGNET, Management and Administration Network; POLNET, Political, Peace and Humanitarian Network; SAFETYNET, Internal Security and Safety Network; SCINET, Science Network.

[a] Excluding Under-Secretaries-General, Assistant Secretaries-General and staff with temporary appointments.

[b] Secretariat staff administered by the United Nations Development Programme who currently have no recorded job code in Umoja.

(d) Use of the Field Service category

49. The Secretariat is moving forward with the implementation of the revised criteria for the use of the Field Service category, as recommended by ICSC in its report to the General Assembly (A/72/30 and A/72/30/Corr.1). Implementation includes a review of equivalencies and classification standards of the Field Service category in order to grade positions on the basis of the General Service and Professional job classification standards approved by ICSC. The Secretariat is developing guidelines on the use of the Field Service category in line with the revised criteria. These guidelines will form part of the summary guidance that will be issued for all staff categories.

2. Recruitment

50. Attracting and recruiting a top-standard workforce is a key priority of the Secretary-General. All departments and offices have been engaged in a collective effort to shorten the length of the recruitment process. With the provision of additional monitoring and training for hiring managers, a positive impact on recruitment timelines has been seen. The reduced posting period for Professional-level job openings at Headquarters, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions has shortened recruitment timelines without any adverse impact on the ability of applicants to identify and apply for vacant positions.

(a) Recruitment timelines

51. In order to provide a comprehensive overview of the recruitment timelines for international staff recruited under ST/AI/2010/3, as amended, and to ensure greater consistency in the reporting of timelines, the reporting methodology has been adjusted. The analysis below includes recruitments at the FS-4 to FS-7 levels and the P-3 to D-1 levels and is reported in calendar days. Historical information has been provided using the same methodology in order to provide the relevant comparative data for prior years.

52. While the recruitment process in the Secretariat took an average of 170 calendar days in 2016, a reduction to 159 calendar days was seen in 2017. This time frame begins with the posting of a job opening and ends with the selection of a candidate, and includes roster selections, recruit-from-roster selections and non-roster selections.[1] Table 5 shows the average duration of the recruitment process in the years 2014 to 2017 by type of entity for the FS-4 to FS-7 and P-3 to D-1 levels.

Table 5
Average duration of the recruitment process (FS-4 to FS-7 and P-3 to D-1 levels, under ST/AI/2010/3, as amended)

(Calendar days)

		Selection year			
Entity	*Target*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*
Headquarters departments and offices, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions	120	194	199	222	206
Field missions[a]	120	84	102	129	116
Overall average duration of the recruitment process	**120**	**137**	**145**	**170**	**159**

Source: HR Insight.

Note: The table includes job openings at the FS-4 to FS-7 and P-3 to D-1 levels subject to the staff selection system outlined in ST/AI/2010/3, as amended, excluding generic job openings used to create rosters for the field. It does not include temporary job openings advertised in accordance with ST/AI/2010/4/Rev.1 or job openings advertised under the staff selection and managed mobility system outlined in ST/AI/2016/1, as amended.

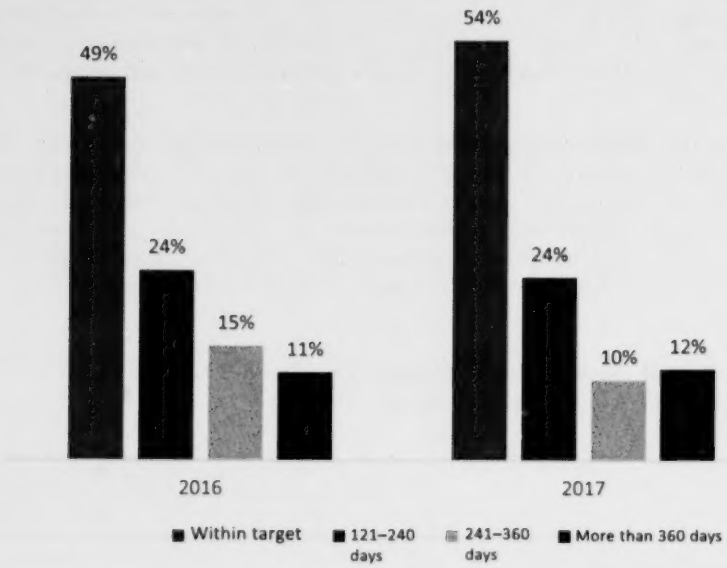
[a] This includes special political missions and peacekeeping missions.

53. While efforts continue to reduce the recruitment timelines, a significant proportion of recruitment processes are completed within the 120-day target. In 2016 and 2017, respectively, 49 per cent and 54 per cent of selections in the Field Service category and at the P-3 to D-1 levels met the 120-day target, as depicted in figure I below.

[1] "Roster selections" refer to job openings open to both roster and non-roster candidates for which roster candidates were selected without further referral to a central review body. "Recruit-from-roster selections" refer to selections made following a recruit-from-roster job opening that was open exclusively to roster candidates and advertised by entities with approval to use roster-based recruitment. "Non-roster selections" refer to all other selections.

Figure I

Ranges of recruitment timelines for job openings in 2016 and 2017 (January to December, FS-4 to FS-7 and P-3 to D-1 levels, under ST/AI/2010/3, as amended)



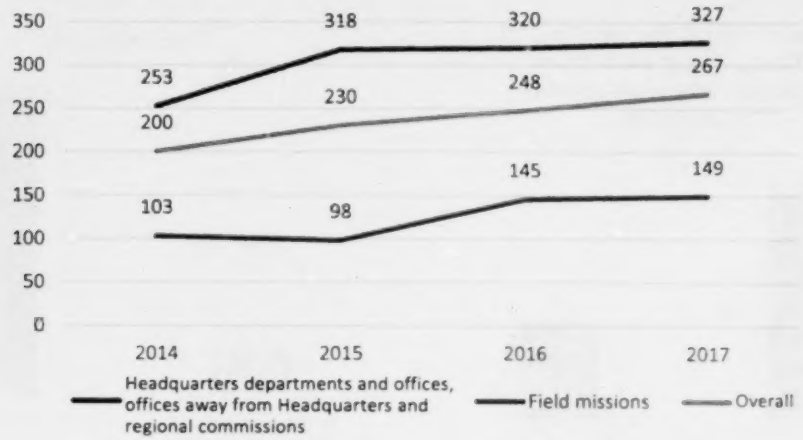
Source: HR Insight.

Note: The figure includes job openings at the FS-4 to FS-7 and P-3 to D-1 levels subject to the staff selection system outlined in ST/AI/2010/3, as amended, excluding generic job openings used to create rosters for the field. It does not include temporary job openings advertised in accordance with ST/AI/2010/4/Rev.1 or job openings advertised under the staff selection and managed mobility system outlined in ST/AI/2016/1, as amended.

54. The number of applications received for each job opening has increased steadily, from an average of 200 in 2014 to 267 in 2017 (see figure II for the P-3 to D-1 levels). This positive development also creates challenges for the recruitment timelines, as hiring managers are required to review more job applications.

Figure II

Average number of applications from 2014 to 2017 (January to December, P-3 to D-1 levels, under ST/AI/2010/3, as amended)



Source: Inspira.

Note: The figure includes job openings at the P-3 to D-1 levels subject to the staff selection system outlined in ST/AI/2010/3, as amended, excluding generic job openings used to create rosters for the field. It does not include temporary job openings advertised in accordance with ST/AI/2010/4/Rev.1 or job openings advertised under the staff selection and managed mobility system outlined in ST/AI/2016/1, as amended.

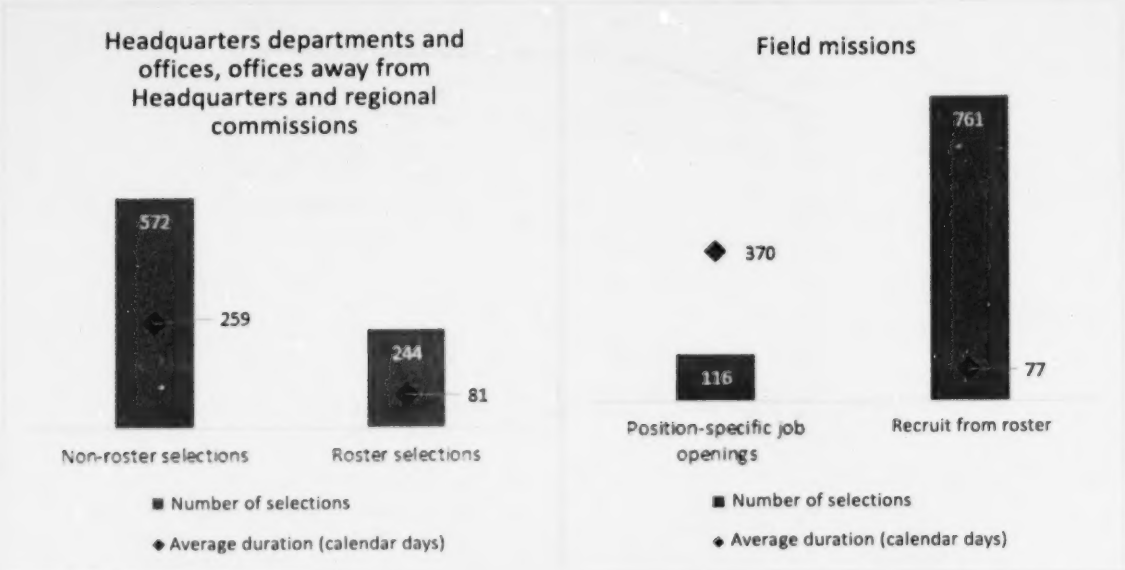
55. In Headquarters departments and offices, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions, the recruitment process took an average of 222 calendar days in 2016 and 206 calendar days in 2017. A significant proportion of this time was spent by hiring managers in reviewing, evaluating and assessing job applicants.

56. In field missions, the recruitment process took an average of 129 calendar days in 2016 and 116 calendar days in 2017. The shorter recruitment timeline in field missions is due mainly to the use of the recruit-from-roster modality. There are also fewer applicants to positions at the P-3 to D-1 levels in the field, and the recruit-from-roster modality is used for many job openings (see figure II above).

57. As illustrated in figure III below, the recruitment timelines are significantly shorter when candidates are recruited from the rosters. Roster candidates (internal and external) have already been vetted through a competitive staff selection process and cleared by the central review bodies. They can therefore be recommended for selection without further evaluation.

Figure III

Recruitment timelines per entity and selection type for the year 2017 (January to December, FS-4 to FS-7 and P-3 to D-1 levels, under ST/AI/2010/3, as amended)



Source: HR Insight.

Note: The figure includes job openings at the FS-4 to FS-7 and P-3 to D-1 levels subject to the staff selection system outlined in ST/AI/2010/3, as amended, excluding generic job openings used to create rosters for the field. It does not include temporary job openings advertised in accordance with ST/AI/2010/4/Rev.1 or job openings advertised under the staff selection and managed mobility system outlined in ST/AI/2016/1, as amended.

58. Considering the increase in the number of applications in recent years, the Secretariat has taken several steps to expedite recruitment. In 2017, a series of enhancements were introduced in Inspira to streamline and simplify the evaluation process and the recording of results in the system. This made the recruitment process more efficient, while maintaining objectivity throughout the process.

59. To accelerate the achievement of the recruitment timeline target, in 2017, the Secretariat introduced a system for monitoring open job openings to identify and immediately address delays in the recruitment process. This entailed conducting an in-depth analysis of each open job opening, identifying the steps of the recruitment process where the job opening was delayed and providing guidance and support to the hiring department or office. These efforts were coupled with the training of hiring managers on the staff selection system and targeted meetings with client departments and offices to discuss strategies to help them to achieve their targets.

Impact of the 45-day posting period

60. Following the decision of the General Assembly in its resolution 71/263, since January 2017, the Secretariat has been posting, on a pilot basis, job openings in the Professional and higher categories at Headquarters, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions for 45 days. In table 6, the recruitment timelines for job openings advertised for 45 days, in 2017, are compared with those advertised for 60 days, in 2016, for which non-roster selections were made.

Table 6
Comparison between 45-day and 60-day posting periods (non-roster selections)

	Selection year		
	2016 (60-day posting)	*2017 (45-day posting)*	*Difference*
Average duration of the recruitment process (calendar days)	200	166	(34)
Average number of applications	272	316	44
Average number of applications from developing Member States	165	197	32

Source: Inspira.

61. As reflected in table 6, the recruitment timelines for job openings posted for 45 days were reduced by 34 days, more than twice the 15-day reduction in the posting period, without any adverse impact on the number of applicants, including those from developing countries. On the contrary, there was an increase in the average number of overall applications and in the number of applications from developing countries for job openings for which non-roster selections were made.

62. Heads of entity have pledged to the Secretary-General to complete all steps in the recruitment process within the timeline targets set out in the senior managers' compacts.

63. Having established that the shorter posting period speeds up the recruitment process without affecting the number or diversity of applicants, the Secretary-General reiterates the request made to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session to reduce the standard posting period for position-specific job openings to 30 days (see A/71/323). The number of applications will continue to be monitored and an update will be provided to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

(b) Equal treatment of job applicants

64. The Secretariat has undertaken efforts to ensure the continued equal treatment of internal and external applicants. Specifically, all job openings subject to international recruitment are made publicly accessible on the Internet through the United Nations careers website and Inspira. The Secretariat considers all applicants according to the same pre-approved criteria and established procedures throughout the recruitment process, except for restrictions placed on staff members from the General Service and related categories applying to the Professional category. To establish a level playing field for all applicants, job postings and assessments are required to be non-United Nations centric to the extent possible.

65. To remove barriers faced by persons with disabilities when searching for and applying to job openings, the Secretariat implemented accessibility features both on the careers website and in Inspira in December 2017. These enhancements are a part of the commitment of the United Nations to providing equal employment opportunities to all applicants. Since their implementation, the accessibility features have been activated more 13,000 times on the careers website and more than 20,000 times in Inspira as at 30 June 2018.

66. To ensure fairness in considering educational qualifications from different education systems, the Secretariat determines the equivalency of qualifications with reference to their accreditation and recognition status in the respective Member States. To achieve this, the Secretariat uses the World Higher Education Database, compiled by the International Association of Universities, and the International

Standard Classification of Education standards, designed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

(c) Young professionals programme

Enhancement of the examination process

67. Since the launch of the young professionals programme, in 2011, significant progress has been made in modernizing, streamlining and professionalizing the examination process. Following the most recent update by the Secretary-General (see A/71/323), several enhancements have been made.

68. In 2017, the first written young professionals programme examination for the Political, Peace and Humanitarian Network was conducted through an online platform, accessible from any location. The benefits of digitalizing the examination include increased accessibility and a reduction in the logistics and costs associated with conducting in-person examinations at more than 50 centres.

69. The immediate benefits realized by delivering the examination online included:

(a) Higher participation rates: 90 per cent of convoked candidates participated in the examination delivered online, as opposed to the average participation rate of 73 per cent in the in-person written examinations of 2011 to 2016;

(b) Greater diversity of participants: nationals from 16 unrepresented and underrepresented Members States, who would not have had an examination centre in their country owing to the low number of applications, participated in the examination;

(c) Positive participant feedback: the online administration of the examination has been well received by applicants. Among the participants who responded to the post-examination survey, 96.5 per cent rated the quality of their internet connection as good (with no or minor delays in loading and no or minor breaks in connection) and 96 per cent found the sample test to be useful.

70. The Secretariat will continue to undertake further enhancements to the young professionals programme in several areas, including:

(a) The introduction of on-demand young professionals programme examinations for smaller job families;

(b) The enhancement of the young professionals programme application process through the introduction of voluntary self-assessment questionnaires;

(c) A review of the current format of the general paper to broaden its scope, from assessing drafting skills to allowing candidates to demonstrate their proficiency in the core values and fundamental competencies necessary for success in working in the Secretariat.

Placement of successful candidates in the young professionals programme

71. In 2016 and 2017, respectively, 60 and 69 successful candidates of the young professionals programme examination and its predecessor examinations were appointed to P-2 positions under the terms of appointment of the programme. Following the endorsement by the General Assembly, in its resolution 71/263, of the extension by three years of the period of time during which successful candidates may remain on the young professionals programme roster, two candidates from the rosters of the examinations held in 2014, originally scheduled to expire in 2017, were successfully appointed as staff members.

Managed reassignment programme

72. The managed reassignment programme for staff at the P-2 level recruited through the young professionals programme was enhanced through the introduction of a dedicated module in Inspira. The module has streamlined and simplified the expressions of interest and matching processes. It has also improved transparency by keeping all stakeholders informed throughout the matching exercise.

(d) Gender parity

73. The Secretary-General is leading a set of broad-ranging efforts to achieve gender parity within the Secretariat and across the United Nations common system. With a goal to reach gender parity across the United Nations common system by 2028, the Secretary-General launched the system-wide strategy on gender parity in September 2017. The strategy sets out clear targets and accountability measures for reaching them. It calls for new measures to target outreach and recruitment efforts and to strengthen the retention of women, in particular at senior levels. It challenges senior management to reach bold but realistic targets, while at the same time recognizing that different entities have different starting points and challenges. Within the Secretariat, a new website on gender parity and equality has been launched to support and monitor progress towards the gender parity targets and to provide staff and managers with a set of resources on forward-thinking gender policies.

74. Recognizing that gender parity is not just about numbers, the Secretariat is taking action to shift the institutional culture. Unconscious bias in the recruitment process is being addressed. Working with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Secretariat is designing an unconscious bias training programme to help staff at all levels to understand the nature of bias and to take steps to mitigate it. At the policy level, existing and new policies have been reviewed to assess their potential impact on gender parity and are being revised to include measures that contribute to the retention of women and an inclusive workplace that fosters equality for women and men and promotes work-life balance. Gender-neutral language is being systematically used as a way to signal and support the cultural change.

75. Additional efforts have been taken to ensure that the recruitment process contributes to the Secretariat's gender goals. A special notice included in job openings highlights the commitment of the United Nations to gender parity and encourages women to apply. This notice is included in any job opening where greater representation of women is necessary to reach gender targets. Reminders on gender parity targets are sent to hiring managers before the evaluation of job applications, and information on gender parity is presented to departments and offices during periodic briefings and meetings. Inspira is now equipped to provide analytics to help hiring managers to keep track of gender ratios throughout the recruitment process.

76. To ensure a strong pool of women applicants for key positions, the Secretariat is engaging in a number of outreach activities. For key job openings, professional organizations for women are targeted to raise awareness of career opportunities and to attract a competent and diverse applicant pool. To achieve synergies in advancing gender parity across the organizations of the United Nations common system, the Secretariat is partnering with other organizations in the Human Resources Network to collaborate in sourcing senior female staff and sharing information on qualified female applicants.

77. These measures have already produced concrete results. Under the leadership of the Secretary-General, the United Nations achieved, for the first time, gender parity in the Senior Management Group earlier this year.

(e) Geographical balance

78. The United Nations relies on a geographically diverse workforce to fulfil its mandate. To continuously improve geographical distribution in positions in the Professional and higher categories, all job openings subject to the system of desirable ranges list unrepresented and underrepresented Member States to encourage applicants from those Member States to apply to that specific job opening. Hiring departments and offices are reminded of the need to attract, identify and select qualified candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States.

79. Human resources focal points are kept up to date on the representation status of Member States so that hiring managers can give due consideration to job applicants from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States. Reminders are sent to managers throughout the recruitment process, and Inspira has been equipped to flag the nationality of applicants to facilitate comparison against the list of Member States appearing in the special notice on geographical balance. The representation status of the nationality of each recommended candidate is updated for the head of department or office to take in to account when making the selection decision.

80. The Secretary-General presented a number of proposals for retaining and widening the base figure of professional posts subject to the system of desirable ranges (see A/73/372/Add.3). The proposals were intended to contribute towards establishing a more effective tool for ensuring equitable geographical distribution within the Secretariat in relation to all posts financed through the regular budget.

81. The Secretary-General is deeply committed to ensuring greater regional diversity throughout the Secretariat, as well as increasing the representation of troop- and police-contributing countries, as required by legislative bodies. The senior managers' compacts, for the first time, included an indicator on regional diversity measuring progress from one year to the next, with a view to achieving greater regional diversity. The regional groups are the African Group, the Asia-Pacific Group, the Latin America and Caribbean Group, the Eastern European Group and the Group of Western European and other States.[2] The regional diversity of staff across the Secretariat and within each entity was analysed and mapped for the first time (see A/73/372, annex 3). This data will serve as a benchmark to monitor progress in future. Senior managers will be expected to report annually on the efforts that they have taken to achieve greater regional diversity.

(f) Career opportunities for staff members in the General Service and related categories

82. At the seventy-first session, the Secretary-General submitted proposals that aimed to further the principle of the equal treatment of all applicants by enabling better career progression and growth of staff in the General Service and related categories to the Professional category (see A/71/323, paras. 53–58). Staff members in the General Service and related categories and in the Field Service category, up to the FS-5 level, are currently not eligible to apply to positions in the Professional category unless they have passed the young professionals programme examination as "G to P" or "G to N" candidates or they resign, and even then, only 10 per cent of young professionals programmes placements each year can be "G to P" candidates. This has provided staff members in the General Service and related categories and in the Field Service category, up to the FS-5 level, with only limited opportunities for advancement.

[2] See www.un.org/depts/DGACM/RegionalGroups.shtml.

83. In response to the Secretary-General's set of proposals, the General Assembly requested further analysis of the potential impact on human resources objectives resulting from the proposed elimination of the examination requirement for staff in the General Service and related categories (see A/71/557, para. 44, and General Assembly resolution 71/263, para. 3). To respond to the request of the General Assembly, the Staff-Management Committee referred the issue to its working group on the career development of the General Service and related categories. The focus was to understand how the proposals might impact the human resources objectives of: (a) securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity; (b) achieving equitable geographical distribution; and (c) achieving gender parity.

Securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity

84. A review of the academic experience and language qualifications of the General Service and related categories was conducted to determine the potential impact of allowing applications to Professional-level positions. It was found that these staff members hold a wealth of institutional knowledge and a sound understanding of the Organization's culture, processes and tools.

85. While positions in the General Service and related categories, as well as the Field Service category, require a high school diploma or equivalent, an analysis of the educational level of more than 7,000 selected applicants to job openings in Inspira at the GS-5 to GS-7 and FS-3 to FS-5 levels since 2011 revealed that the majority (67 per cent) have a recognized first level degree (e.g., bachelor's or equivalent) and about one third (30 per cent) have an advanced degree (e.g., master's or equivalent or above). Considering the academic qualifications of many staff in the General Service and related categories and in the Field Service category, up to the FS-5 level, it is evident that they represent an untapped pool of qualified talent that is well-positioned to contribute to an efficient, competent and high-performing workforce.

86. A similar analysis of the language qualifications among staff at the GS-5 to GS-7 and FS-3 to FS-5 levels was also undertaken. The General Assembly has emphasized the importance of the equality of the six official languages of the United Nations (see resolution 71/328, para. 2). The analysis demonstrated that 36 per cent of selected candidates indicated that they were fluent in two or more of the official languages of the Organization.

Potential impact on geographical and gender balance of lifting the restriction on the General Service and related categories

87. The data showed that about 25 per cent of current staff at the GS-5 to GS-7 levels have nationalities from Member States that were unrepresented or underrepresented as at January 2018. Enabling staff in these categories to apply and compete for positions at the Professional level increases the potential to improve geographical balance.

88. As at 31 January 2018, 50 per cent of staff at the GS-5 to GS-7 levels were women. In the Professional and higher categories, the gender ratio was less balanced, with 45 per cent female staff at the P-2 to P-4 levels and 35 per cent at the senior levels of P-5 to D-2. In the field, the proportion of women was 33 per cent at the P-2 to P-4 levels and 26 per cent at the P-5 to D-2 levels. Allowing qualified female staff from the General Service and related categories to apply to the Professional level would add to the talent pool of women and have a positive impact on the organizational objective of achieving gender parity.

Principle of equal treatment

89. The Secretary-General strongly believes that the principle of equal treatment must be upheld by removing the restriction placed on staff members in the General Service and related categories and at the FS-1 to FS-5 levels of the Field Service category to apply to posts in the Professional category. In addition to aligning the Secretariat with other organizations of the United Nations common system, this move will have a positive impact on the engagement of staff by ensuring that they are not barred from recruitment owing simply to their status as serving staff members in the General Service and related categories or the Field Service category. The Secretariat has ensured that the staff selection system includes a careful review of all applicants and that selected candidates meet all established selection criteria, including academic, language and experience requirements, with due consideration to gender and geographical balance.

90. On the basis of the evidence presented regarding this pool of well-qualified and experienced staff members and the potential to have a positive impact on staff engagement, gender balance and geographical representation, the Secretary-General would welcome the endorsement by the General Assembly of the proposal to allow all staff serving in the General Service and related categories and at the FS-1 to FS-5 levels in the Field Service category to apply for positions in the Professional category up to the P-3 level that are not earmarked for the young professionals programme. As such, the Secretary-General further requests the General Assembly to endorse the removal of the "G to P" element from the young professionals programme, which will continue to be used to recruit young professional candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States.

(g) Outreach

91. In addition to outreach for female applicants as part of the Secretary-General's gender parity initiatives, the Secretariat actively engages in outreach activities to target key applicant groups, including applicants from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States and troop- and police-contributing countries and young people. Outreach briefings are given to Permanent Missions in New York as well as various groups worldwide. Outreach missions to target potential applicants from underrepresented and unrepresented Member States have been taken to Angola, Brazil, Canada, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Israel, Japan, Monaco, Norway, Oman, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

92. The young professionals programme has had a positive impact on efforts to reach underrepresented and unrepresented Member States. Participation in the programme has increased, as have roster selections of young professional nationals from participating countries. Several Member States changed their geographic representation status from "underrepresented" to "within range" from mid-2015 to the end of 2017, including Czechia, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Montenegro, Poland, Slovakia, Somalia and Turkey.

93. In support of the Secretary-General's initiative of ensuring diversity and inclusion in the workplace, the Secretariat undertook outreach activities to national and international organizations to attract individuals with disabilities. The Secretariat has partnered with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Volunteers and participated in several networking and outreach activities for exchanging best practices for the employment of persons with disabilities.

Engagement of young people

94. The engagement of young people in the Organization's activities is another high priority of the Secretary-General. As part of its efforts to enhance geographic representation, the Secretariat provided support to the young professionals programme and the Secretariat's internship programme by reaching out to cohorts of young professionals worldwide. Efforts included the targeting of potential applicants at universities through the dissemination of vacancies on online university job boards. The Secretariat has established ongoing cooperation with universities and efforts are now under way to tap into university alumni associations.

95. The Secretariat continues to increase its use of social media as an outreach tool. It has increased its presence on social media, using the three most popular global sites, Facebook, with more than 900,000 users, Twitter, with more than 60,000 users, and LinkedIn, which has close to 1 million users, to promote Secretariat career opportunities. Social media has proved to be cost effective for targeting mid- and senior-level professionals. The Secretariat is exploring further options for using targeted and more efficient online recruitment platforms in its outreach efforts.

96. To evaluate the impact of outreach, a mandatory questionnaire has been added in Inspira to capture data from job applicants. Applicants are asked how they found out about the position to which they are applying. The results show the steady growth of applicants who have applied for a position as a result of the Secretariat's outreach activities. The most recent data show that 25 per cent of applicants applied for a Secretariat job because of an outreach activity.

3. Staff engagement

97. For the first time, an Organization-wide staff engagement survey was conducted by the Secretariat. The survey captured staff perceptions on a range of issues relating to staff engagement, with the aim of identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement within the Secretariat and facilitating action planning across the Secretariat to ensure continuous improvement in key areas.

98. The results revealed that Secretariat staff are engaged (72 per cent positive responses) and aligned with organizational goals (70 per cent positive responses). The survey also identified opportunities for improvement that will help to ensure a positive working environment.

99. The survey focused on three areas that are critical to the execution of mandates by the Organization:

(a) Staff engagement, whereby the pride, energy and optimism that staff express in relation to their work at the Secretariat was measured;

(b) Strategic alignment, whereby the understanding of staff members of the link between the actions of individuals and teams and the goals of the Organization was measured;

(c) Organizational agility, whereby the extent to which staff, teams and the Secretariat are equipped and flexible enough to adapt and respond to changes in their environment was assessed.

100. The following two themes of importance to the United Nations were added to the survey: "continuous improvement" and "gender and diversity". The survey was open to all civilian staff from 4 to 18 December 2017.

(a) Key findings

101. The overall response rate was 39 per cent (more than 14,000 staff), which provided a high level of confidence that the results are reflective of the overall staff population.

102. An analysis of the results showed that the Secretariat has a highly engaged and aligned workforce, as the measures of engagement and alignment significantly exceed the results of similar surveys in the public sector. Staff members are proud to work at the United Nations and are energized by their work. Staff understand how their work contributes to the Organization's goals, report positive collaboration between co-workers and feel empowered to solicit help when needed. The core strengths of Secretariat staff include pride in one's work (approaching 90 per cent positive responses), support for diversity, co-worker collaboration and the importance of acting ethically and with integrity (all above 75 per cent positive responses).

103. The results also highlighted areas in which the Secretariat has scope for improvement. While staff know how to report unethical behaviour, more information and support is needed in relation to initiatives and policies on protection from retaliation. In terms of working environment, staff feel empowered to solicit help when needed. However, the results also indicate that the Secretariat needs to focus on continuous staff learning and development.

104. When disaggregated by demographics, the results suggest that there are some significant variations. For example, men express more favourable opinions than women, in particular in relation to questions on gender and diversity. This underlines the importance of the Secretary-General's strategy for achieving gender parity.

(b) Dissemination of results and next steps

105. Heads of departments and offices have been empowered to review and analyse the results for their entities, in close partnership with their staff. The Secretariat has provided a range of support services to heads of departments and offices, beginning with a dedicated briefing for senior managers. This was followed by a series of virtual training sessions, at which focal points from each entity were introduced to the survey results portal and informed of different ways to view and analyse the data. These sessions were followed by briefings for all offices on how to use the survey results to facilitate increased dialogue with staff and how to translate them into action plans.

106. All departments and offices are required to develop an action plan in collaboration with staff. The implementation of the action plans will continue throughout 2018 and 2019, with ongoing support and monitoring by the Department of Management. The action plans will conclude at the end of 2019, when the staff engagement survey will be repeated, allowing departments and offices to see where they have made progress and where they need to focus for 2020 and beyond.

C. Performance management

107. The Secretary-General's vision for management reform includes a robust and transparent system to plan and assess staff performance, as well as mechanisms to reward high-performing staff and support underperformers. A two-phased approach to a new performance management system was outlined to the General Assembly in the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of human resources management reform (A/71/323). First, the credibility and reliability of performance evaluations will be strengthened. Second, staff performance will become a criterion for career progression in the Organization. Progress made in the first phase of this approach, the

implementation of which commenced in 2017 and which will conclude in 2019, was focused on three key elements:

(a) Improving the performance management skills of managers;

(b) Providing increased human resources expertise and support;

(c) Increasing the objectivity, transparency and consistency of the performance management system.

108. In developing the approach, the Secretariat has incorporated the views and decisions of the General Assembly on performance management in its resolutions 65/247, 68/252, 68/265 and 71/263, in which the importance of addressing gaps in the current performance management system was emphasized. The approach incorporates the Secretary-General's initiative to strengthen overall organizational accountability, as described in his reports (A/72/492/Add.1 and A/72/773) and approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/266 B. Lessons learned from the internal justice system, observations of the Ombudsperson, findings from internal reviews and perspectives of managers and staff were also taken into account.

1. Improving the ability of managers to manage performance

109. Improving the ability of managers to manage the performance of others is at the heart of the Secretary-General's reform efforts. To improve the understanding of the challenges and strengths of the current system, and to better inform plans to improve it, a gap analysis was conducted in 2017. The research involved 188 managers across six duty stations and six field missions, as well as stakeholders from various human resources and legal offices and the Office of the Ombudsperson.

110. The data collected was consistent with previous internal research studies conducted by the Secretariat. Participants reported that key areas for improvement in performance management included the following:

(a) Strengthening the evaluation framework through the consistent application of ratings;

(b) Ensuring alignment between individual and larger team and departmental workplans;

(c) Enhancing the ePerformance system;

(d) Strengthening managerial accountability;

(e) Keeping staff and managers informed of the performance management resources available to them.

111. While challenges have been identified with the implementation of the performance management system, managers reported that the current framework provides sufficient structures and processes, assists them with workplanning, encourages staff engagement and enables them to recognize staff who perform well. They noted that the system has improved in recent years. Increased training and outreach by the Secretariat, for example, were frequently linked to improved awareness of staff of their responsibilities and to higher rates of compliance with the ePerformance system. As such, the focus on training managers will continue in the near and long term. For the reporting period, 1,790 managers participated in the Performance Management and Development learning programme, a mandatory course for all staff who supervise others. An online version of the learning programme has been designed to support more managers across the Secretariat.

112. In 2017, the Secretariat initiated the development of an "agile performance management" approach, which included promoting ongoing feedback, collaboration

and greater accountability for results. With the help of external consultants, the Secretariat conducted an institutional readiness assessment at the beginning of 2018. Implementation options from the policy, technical, behavioural and cultural perspectives, as well as the resource, time and change management requirements to support implementation, were identified as part of the assessment. This approach will be applied in three pilot departments, and lessons learned will be captured and reviewed before the approach is mainstreamed across the Secretariat.

113. Changes aimed at enhancing managerial accountability for performance were introduced to the ePerformance documents for the 2017/18 and 2018/19 cycles. The "managing performance" competency, for instance, populates automatically for all first reporting officers to ensure that managers are assessed on this competency by their supervisors. This measure is designed to ensure that managers track more closely the progress of their supervisees towards compliance with ePerformance deadlines. Information on supervisees will be visible to a manager's first reporting officer, increasing the level of accountability for managers for the performance management process and strengthening the reliability and credibility of performance evaluations.

2. Providing increased human resources expertise and support

114. Local human resources teams play a crucial role in supporting managers and staff in performance management. They provide guidance and advice on policy, processes and deadlines and feedback on difficult scenarios and conflicts between managers and staff. In the gap analysis conducted in 2017, the gaps in knowledge and confidence levels among human resources practitioners were analysed through a survey. Of the 106 practitioners who were invited to participate, 71 responded. Results showed that human resources practitioners are knowledgeable and confident in many areas of performance management, but that they need enhanced written and learning support in some areas, such as managing underperformance.

115. The Secretariat has increased support to human resources practitioners by developing and implementing new rebuttal guidelines, conducting performance management training for human resources professionals (252 human resources practitioners participated) and developing facilitator toolkits on the following areas:

(a) Addressing underperformance;

(b) The mandatory Performance Management and Development programme for managers and supervisors;

(c) Strengthening midpoint reviews.

More guidance materials for all stakeholders, including human resources practitioners, were made available in the redesigned performance management pages on the human resources portal. The online version of the Performance Management and Development programme, which will be launched in 2018, will support human resources efforts to ensure that all managers are trained in performance management. A case management guide to support human resources practitioners on complex performance situations is under development and will be available in 2019.

3. Increasing the consistency and transparency of the performance management system

116. In its resolution 71/263, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to analyse and report on patterns and trends in completion rates. In 2017, the Secretary-General published a report on compliance rates for the 2016/17 ePerformance cycle on iSeek to increase knowledge and transparency around the performance management process. In the report, the end-of-cycle compliance rates

for the three previous ePerformance cycles were reviewed (85 per cent for the 2014/15 cycle, 87 per cent for the 2015/16 cycle and 90 per cent for the 2016/17 cycle).

117. As part of improvements to the performance management system, compliance with the performance management process was included as a target in the senior managers' compacts. These compacts reflect the priorities of heads of entity and are translated into workplans for each department, office and mission structure. Improvements in completion rates at the end of the cycle have been noted over the years. While these improvements were a positive development, the improved monitoring capabilities created through the performance management dashboard in HR Insight indicate that continued monitoring is required to ensure the completion of all steps within the appropriate time.

D. Learning and career development

118. A forward-looking Secretariat needs to ensure that its workforce has the knowledge, skills and capacities to deliver high-quality results in challenging operating environments. In 2014, the Secretariat began to develop a learning and career support strategy that links learning and training to ongoing career development for staff. A Secretariat-wide learning needs assessment was used to align the strategy with cross-cutting learning priorities. Data was gathered from more than 200 sources across the Organization, bringing together staff perceptions on learning needs with the priorities and gaps at the organizational level.

1. Secretariat-wide learning programmes

119. To ensure a cohesive approach to standards of conduct across the Organization, Secretariat staff members are required to complete the following core set of mandatory learning programmes:

(a) Basic Security in the Field;

(b) Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Abuse by United Nations Personnel — Working Harmoniously;

(c) HIV/AIDS in the Workplace;

(d) Ethics and Integrity at the United Nations;

(e) Information Security Awareness;

(f) Preventing Fraud and Corruption at the United Nations;

(g) United Nations Human Rights Responsibilities;

(h) An Introduction to Gender Equality;

(i) Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

120. In addition, more than 41,000 learning programmes have been made available to staff, including an updated competency-based interviewing programme with content on unconscious bias, management and leadership development programmes, and language and communications programmes. These programmes reach staff serving in duty stations across the Secretariat.

121. The Secretary-General has identified four priority areas to further strengthen overall support to human resources practitioners in areas relating to talent management: a new leadership model; the further expansion of online learning; learning for organizational change, including mobility, career development and the implementation of Umoja; and a staff engagement survey.

2. New leadership model

122. The Secretariat's leadership and management model has been strengthened with a set of new leadership and management competencies, in line with the United Nations system leadership framework, endorsed by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. The competencies are being used in the Secretariat's revised performance management framework to clearly state performance expectations and hold managers accountable to them, while at the same time linking them directly to learning to further support managers in building the required skills. The new competencies are intended to drive and improve the selection, development and evaluation of the Organization's managers and leaders by aligning the leadership culture with organizational needs.

123. In support of this model, a leadership and management learning hub is being developed in partnership with the United Nations System Staff College. The digital resources and experiences available on the hub are designed to help managers to overcome challenges and to accomplish everyday tasks and responsibilities. The hub is to be further supported by a mentorship approach, whereby managers and leaders can access mentors to help them in transitioning to new leadership roles in the Organization.

3. Further expansion of online learning

124. To facilitate accessibility for all staff and better address evolving learning needs in a flexible and cost-efficient manner, many programmes continued to be offered through online learning platforms. The learning management system in Inspira continued to serve as a central registration and data hub for learning across the Secretariat. In addition, the Secretariat has standardized new learning technology to allow for social and collaborative learning. This learning system will be used to further expand the Secretariat's eLearning offerings.

125. The Lynda.com online learning library was launched in 2017 to provide a high-quality, extensive learning resource for staff. It currently has 11,000 users and features microlearning videos (that last less than 5 minutes) and video courses. It has further increased the access of staff in all duty stations to learning, with a large percentage of learners located in the field.

4. Learning for organizational change

126. Targeted support is being put in place for staff in taking up new roles and responsibilities. In addition to providing induction training and mentoring for young professionals programme staff, the Secretariat is exploring how to expand the reach of the mentoring programme, through an online platform, to staff transitioning into managerial functions. The Secretariat also revamped the online global induction platform, providing new and transferring staff members with learning programmes specific to their job function and duty station. The career counselling programme was also revamped to provide staff with global access to confidential career coaches through Internet-based technology.

127. In support of the Secretariat's efforts to ensure diversity and inclusion in the workplace, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, began to develop an online course on the inclusion of persons with disabilities, as well as learning and reference materials for staff and managers on working with persons with disabilities.

128. A language harmonization project has been launched to align language learning across the Organization and to determine the required working level for each of the six official languages. The main content of the United Nations language framework

was completed and includes a definition for each of the four levels of language competence, which will support the development of guidelines on setting language requirements in job openings, a consistent policy framework on multilingualism and an inventory of staff language skills, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/328.

129. The Secretariat continued to provide Umoja training and developed and updated Umoja learning resources in the area of human resources. Job aids were created and revised in support of the new compensation package for the international Professional category, the roll-out of the Umoja annual declaration form and process, enhanced end-of-cycle time monitoring and the implementation of revised education grant processing in Umoja. Online training courses were produced and published for the Umoja human resources display role and the service entry sheet for certifying officers, replacing classroom instruction.

E. Staff health and well-being

1. Priorities for staff health and well-being

130. The Secretariat is implementing systemic, comprehensive and evidence-based measures to improve the health, safety and access to care of all United Nations personnel, wherever they may serve. The priorities for intervention in this biennium were targeted health promotion, occupational safety and health, a reduction in absences due to sick leave, systematic health risk assessment and health support planning, improvements in the management of the safety and quality of health care, and the development and delivery of training programmes for civilian and uniformed personnel.

2. Health promotion and chronic disease prevention

131. In September 2017, as part of efforts to prevent chronic disease and promote health, the Secretariat organized a successful $190,000 global health challenge for 3,143 United Nations staff from 43 duty stations globally. The Secretariat was ranked second out of 238 private and non-profit worldwide organizations, on the basis of the levels of participation, achievement and engagement. Participants reported that the challenge led to significant improvements to their health, including weight loss, no longer needing medication for chronic diseases, improved sleep and reduced stress.

132. In February 2018, the Secretariat published the "Vaccination and malaria prophylaxis recommendations for United Nations personnel on official travel and United Nations health-care workers", in which clear guidelines were provided on the travel vaccinations and prophylaxis required and recommended for certain destinations.

133. Multiple tools and templates were developed and published in advance of potential public health emergencies, including risk mitigation plans (in English and French) for the Zika virus (April 2017), cholera (June 2017), Lassa fever (February 2018), malaria (draft) and plague in Madagascar (November 2017). Specific health-related web pages were created on the human resources portal, including a number of disease-specific pages and a travel health information page.

3. Health-care safety and quality

134. The Secretariat has made headway in improving staff health care and safety. The job descriptions of chief medical officers have been revamped, and recruitment efforts are under way to fill these positions in field missions. The credentialing of troop-contributing countries health-care personnel is in progress, under the direction of the

Secretariat. Standards of professional practice have been supported by the delivery of professional development events through webinars and educational meetings for health-care staff.

135. United Nations international standards for health-care quality and patient safety have been developed to enhance staff health-care standards. A manual, an assessment guide and an implementation guide are available. Enhancements to the EarthMed system were undertaken to facilitate responses to clinical queries in support of overall clinical care. Monitoring at the patient level allows for feedback on and improvements to laboratory testing, antibiotic utilization, chronic disease surveillance and vaccination maintenance.

4. Occupational safety and health

136. The Secretariat focused on the implementation of the three key elements of the framework for occupational safety and health of the High-level Committee on Management: (a) raising awareness; (b) incident reporting; and (c) policy formulation.

137. Occupational safety and health teams were externally accredited through the training of 115 staff members, including medical personnel, from different duty stations on occupational safety and health principles to raise the awareness and the profile of occupational safety and health matters in the workplace.

138. With respect to incident reporting, EarthMed allows medical records to be entered into the system and indicates whether any new illness or injury diagnosis is work-related. This is a first step towards a comprehensive occupational safety and health reporting system. A full-scale safety module in EarthMed that will allow for improved collection of incidents and detailed analysis of this data will be included in 2018.

139. In support of his commitment to providing a safe and healthy workplace in line with the duty of care of the Organization, the Secretary-General promulgated his bulletin on the introduction of an occupational safety and health management system (ST/SGB/2018/5).

140. A risk-based and expedited medical clearance approach has been introduced for pre-employment and reassignment clearances that allows for resources to be concentrated on the staff members at risk. This new approach contributes to an expedited onboarding process. From September 2017 to August 2018, some 4,000 requests for medical clearance were received by the Secretariat. Some 2,900 cases (62 per cent) were cleared using the expedited process that eliminates the need for a doctor visit, x-rays or blood tests, yielding an estimated saving of approximately $800,000.

141. In 2017, a new automated travel medical clearance system was developed and implemented as a pilot for staff based at Headquarters in New York. This system ensures that every Umoja travel request goes through a travel clearance process.

142. These efforts were supported by guidelines and policies adopted by the task force on duty of care of the High-level Committee on Management. New health risk assessment methodology for duty stations was developed in collaboration with the medical services of other United Nations system organizations and adopted by the Committee. The new methodology allows for a standardized assessment of physical and psychosocial health risks and of the availability and accessibility of health-care services at United Nations duty stations and suggests risk mitigation measures. It represents a significant positive collaboration between the medical directors of the United Nations system and the staff and stress counsellors. The methodology was coupled with a new method for the assessment of referral hospitals for field duty

stations that is based on internationally recognized standards and is consistently applied by the Secretariat. The Secretariat also implemented new policies on vaccinations and air pollution.

5. Staff mental health and well-being

(a) Mental health strategy

143. The Secretary-General has recognized that staff mental health needs to be supported in the workplace, in particular in challenging field environments. Mental health conditions have been identified as a main contributing factor for lost days due to sick leave or permanent disability. A comprehensive mental health survey was undertaken, and more than 17,000 responses were received from across 11 United Nations entities. The results of the survey show the need to address the mental health concerns of staff, in particular the fact that very few staff reporting mental health conditions receive the support they require. Following the analysis of the data from the mental health survey, the mental health and well-being strategy of the United Nations system was endorsed by the High-level Committee on Management in 2017.

144. In 2018, the mental health strategy for the United Nations system was launched, with the aim of creating a workplace that enhances mental and physical well-being and supports staff members living with mental health conditions.

(b) Staff counselling

145. Staff counselling is being implemented in innovative ways to deliver services and reach more United Nations personnel at Headquarters and globally. Initiatives include online training on resilience building, sleep hygiene and stress management. Train-the-trainer workshops have been organized for staff and stress counsellors across the United Nations common system working in offices away from Headquarters, regional commissions and field operations. More than 400 staff members were trained in the first six months in several field locations.

(c) Managing sick leave

146. The early management of cases of long-term sick leave is intended to enable staff members with the potential for full rehabilitation to return to the workplace at the earliest possible stage of their illness. Case management tools have been developed, and medical personnel in the Secretariat and agencies, funds and programmes have been trained to identify staff members who are able to return to work

147. A service improvement group has developed a standardized tool for the administrative management of sick leave that applies to staff members in Umoja as well as to staff members of the agencies, funds and programmes.

148. The Secretariat has engaged with departments and offices on the better alignment of sick leave certification and medical clearance procedures. Current efforts are focused on the development of technical modules in EarthMed to provide a standardized tool for processing cases, while maintaining data confidentiality and increasing the reliability and quality of reporting data. This will lead to further targeted interventions.

149. Among the most relevant key performance indicators for the Secretariat is the reduction of sick leave. For the 2014–2015 biennium, the average number of days of sick leave per year per staff member was 7.5 days. For 2016–2017, this average may be reduced to 6.6 days according to data from Umoja.

III. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

150. The Secretary-General invites the General Assembly to take note of the present report and to approve the following:

(a) The extension of the principle of equal treatment of all applicants to positions in the Professional category at the P-1 and P-2 levels (not earmarked for the young professionals programme) and the P-3 level to staff members in the General Service and related categories and in the Field Service category, up to the FS-5 level;

(b) The removal of the "G to P" element from the young professionals programme so that the positions subject to the system of desirable ranges at the P-1 and P-2 levels will be filled exclusively by external candidates from unrepresented or underrepresented Member States;

(c) The reduction of the standard posting period for position-specific job openings from 45 days to 30 days for the Professional and higher categories;

(d) The increase in the maximum earnings limit for retirees in receipt of pension benefits to the equivalent of six months of salary at the midpoint of the salary scale (P-4, step VI);

(e) The approval of the abolition of the requirement that staff members renounce their permanent resident status in a country other than the country of their nationality before being appointed to the Organization.

IV. Summary of follow-up action taken to implement the requests of the General Assembly in its resolutions 65/247 and 71/263 and the requests and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions endorsed by the General Assembly

A. General Assembly

Reference in resolution	*Action taken to implement request*
Resolution 65/247	**Human resources management**
Section VI	**Contractual arrangements**
Paragraph 60	See section II.A.7 on progress made in the granting of continuing appointments
Resolution 71/263	**Human resources management**
Section I	**Human resources management reform**
Paragraph 5	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: ensuring a better future for all" (A/72/492); his report entitled "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: implementing a new management architecture for improved effectiveness and strengthened accountability" (A/72/492/Add.2), as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/266 B; and his report entitled "Global human resources strategy 2019–2021: building a more effective, transparent and accountable United Nations" A/73/372
Paragraph 6	See section II.B.1 above on strategic workforce planning
Paragraph 7	See section II.B.2 (b) above on the equal treatment of internal and external applicants

Reference in resolution	*Action taken to implement request*
Paragraph 8	See section II.B.2 (e) and (g) above on efforts to improve geographical balance
Paragraphs 12 and 13	See section II.B.2 (a) above on efforts to shorten the duration of recruitment processes
Paragraph 15	See section II.B.2 (c). At this time, OHRM is focusing on other enhancements to the exams for the young professionals programme, including offering the exams online to ensure as wide a pool of candidates as possible and reduce the costs associated with operating physical exam centres
Paragraph 17	See section II.B.2 (e) and (g) above on efforts to enhance geographical representation
Paragraphs 19 and 20	See section II.B.2 (d) above on efforts to improve gender parity
Paragraphs 21 and 22	See section II.C above on performance management
Paragraphs 23 and 24	See section II.D above on learning and career development
Section II	**Mobility**
Paragraphs 26–29 and 31	See the report of the Secretary-General on mobility (A/73/372/Add.2)
Section III	**Assessment of desirable ranges**
Paragraph 32	See the report of the Secretary-General on the assessment of the system of desirable ranges (A/73/372/Add.3)
Section IV	**Composition of the Secretariat**
Paragraphs 33–35	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Global human resources strategy 2019–2021: building a more effective, transparent and accountable United Nations" (A/73/372)
Section V	**Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour**
Paragraph 36	See section II.A.3 above on sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and harassment
Paragraph 37	The Secretary-General promulgated administrative instruction ST/AI/2017/1 on unsatisfactory conduct, investigations and the disciplinary process. The administrative instruction applies to all staff members and to staff members on secondment or loan with the Secretariat from a releasing organization that applies the United Nations common system of salaries and allowances, subject to the provisions of the Inter-Organization Agreement concerning Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations Applying the United Nations Common System of Salaries and Allowances
Section VI	**Amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules**
Paragraph 40	See paragraph 14 of the report of the Secretary-General on the practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour, 1 July to 31 December 2017 (A/73/71)
Paragraph 41	Staff rule 3.20 has been promulgated under the Staff Regulations and Rules (ST/SGB/2018/1) to implement the decision of the General Assembly

B. Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Reference in the report of the Advisory Committee	*Action taken to implement request recommendation*

Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in document A/71/557

II. Overview of human resources management reform

Overall comments

Paragraph 12	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Global human resources strategy 2019–2021: building a more effective, transparent and accountable United Nations" (A/73/372)

Pilot projects

Paragraph 15	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Global human resources strategy 2019–2021: building a more effective, transparent and accountable United Nations" (A/73/372)

A. Contractual framework initiatives

Paragraph 22	See section II.D on appointment types in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/73/79)

B. Talent management framework and initiatives

Staff selection and recruitment

Paragraph 29	See section II.B.2 (a) above for an update on efforts to improve recruitment timelines
Paragraph 33	The testing approach was reviewed as part of the comprehensive review of the implementation of the mobility framework. See A/73/372/Add.2
Paragraph 36	See section II.B.2 (a) above regarding the request for a further reduction of the standard posting period from 45 to 30 days for position-specific job openings in the Professional and higher categories
Paragraph 39	See section II.B.2 (c) above. The Office of Human Resources Management continues to focus on enhancing the exams for the young professionals programme, including offering the exams online to ensure as wide a pool of candidates as possible and reduce the costs associated with physical exam centres
Paragraph 44	See section II.B.2 (f) above on career opportunities for staff members in the General Service and related categories
Paragraphs 46 and 47	See section II.B.2 (e) above on efforts to improve geographical balance
Paragraph 49	See section II.B.2 (d) above on efforts to improve gender parity
Paragraph 54	See section II.A.5 above on the use of retired staff members

Performance management

Paragraph 60	See section II.C above on performance management

Learning and career development

Paragraph 61	See section II.D above on learning and career development

Reference in the report of the Advisory Committee	*Action taken to implement request recommendation*
D. Staff health and well-being	
Paragraph 75	See section II.E above on staff health and well-being
III. Mobility	
Paragraphs 83, 90 and 91	A comprehensive review of the implementation of the mobility framework has been conducted. See A/73/372/Add.2
External recruitment	
Paragraph 95	See the report of the Secretary-General on mobility (A/72/767)
IV. Assessment of desirable ranges	
Paragraphs 98 and 99	See the report of the Secretary-General on the assessment of the system of desirable ranges (A/73/372/Add.3)
V. Composition of the Secretariat	
Paragraph 108	See section II.B.1 (c) above on the analysis of staff demographic trends
Paragraph 116	The Secretariat will present a proposal to the Economic and Social Council on the use of Junior Professional Officers in the Secretariat and update the legislative basis for their deployment across the Secretariat
VI. Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour	
Paragraph 120	The Office of Internal Oversight Services receives a notice when an investigation is initiated under ST/AI/2017/1
Paragraph 123	See paragraph 14 of the report of the Secretary-General on the practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour, 1 July to 31 December 2017 (A/73/71)
VII. Amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules	
Paragraph 128	The relevant staff rule was approved by the General Assembly in its seventy-first session. The rule has remained unchanged since; see the report of the Secretary-General on amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules (A/73/378)
Paragraph 130	See section II.A.6 above on the intentions of the Secretary-General

Annex I

Summary of progress made in developing a comprehensive workforce planning system

Type	*Activity*	*Progress made since the adoption of resolution 71/263*
Entity-based approaches	Department of Safety and Security	A workforce planning exercise was completed
	Office of Legal Affairs	A workforce planning exercise has been initiated
	Staff retirements	Member States were provided with forecast retirement reports for their nationals online through the HR Insight reporting tool
		Entities were provided with reporting tools to facilitate the forecasting and timely replacement of staff reaching the mandatory age of separation
	Field missions/ Global Field Support Strategy-related	Civilian staffing reviews have now been completed for all peacekeeping missions, the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, the Global Service Centre and the United Nations Office to the African Union, and the results have been reflected in the respective budget reports
Job network-based approaches	Young professionals programme	Forecasting of the staffing needs of the young professionals programme has continued in order to ensure a sufficient number of candidates on rosters for a three-year period to meet future needs
		Since the inception of the young professionals programme in 2011, 578 individuals have been rostered, of whom 316 (54.67 per cent) have been placed in positions earmarked for the programme, 108 (18.69 per cent) remain on the roster, 86 (14.88 per cent) have been removed from the roster for reasons such as voluntary withdrawal or declining an offer, and 68 (11.76 per cent) have reached the expiration date (as at 31 December 2017)
	Language rosters	Planning to fill language rosters, facilitate the placement of qualified candidates on rosters and oversee the selection of candidates for language positions continued in collaboration with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
	Field rosters	During the 2016/17 period, approximately 38,000 applications were received for 60 generic job openings, managed by 12 occupational group managers and assessed by 118 expert panels. A total of 1,860 candidates from those exercises were endorsed by the field central review bodies. For the 2017/18 period, the Field Personnel Division has 10 occupational group managers who manage 44 generic job openings, with a focus on establishing new rosters related to supply chain management, service delivery, risk management and information and communications technology, and on attracting bilingual candidates and women in accordance with the Secretary-General's goal of achieving gender parity in peace operations

Type	*Activity*	*Progress made since the adoption of resolution 71/263*
	Job code standardization	Standardized job codes in Umoja have been implemented for approximately 13,006 positions Standardized job codes for proposed budgeted positions have been incorporated into the budget instructions

Annex II

Analysis of staff demographics

Age

1. Further to the analysis of staff demographic trends provided in document A/73/372/Add.1, paragraphs 46 to 48 and tables 3 and 4, the Secretariat analysed staff age trends by age range, category, gender and job code.

Age ranges

2. Table 1 below shows the average age of Secretariat staff by range over the last six periods and further highlights that the upward movement of the average age (as described in document A/73/372/Add.1, para. 47) has been reflected in a reduction in the number of staff in the lower age ranges, especially 30–34 and 35–39.

Table 1
Number of staff in Secretariat by age range as at 30 June for 2013 to 2016 and as at 31 December for 2016 and 2017

							Change from 30 June 2013 to 31 December 2017	
Age range	*30 June 2013*	*30 June 2014*	*30 June 2015*	*30 June 2016*	*31 December 2016*	*31 December 2017*	*Staff count*	*Percentage of total*
18–24	134	109	107	88	66	61	(73)	(2.3)
25–29	1 733	1 429	1 286	1 095	1 040	953	(780)	(24.6)
30–34	5 675	5 171	4 583	4 154	3 982	3 601	(2 074)	(65.5)
35–39	8 046	8 031	7 748	7 275	7 006	6 452	(1 594)	(50.3)
40–44	7 824	8 018	8 120	8 084	8 055	7 660	(164)	(5.2)
45–49	6 644	6 889	7 035	7 074	7 070	7 054	410	12.9
50–54	5 627	5 891	6 091	6 117	6 196	6 023	396	12.5
55–59	4 224	4 367	4 425	4 480	4 441	4 581	357	11.3
60–64	1 128	1 271	1 389	1 398	1 428	1 394	266	8.4
65–69	134	139	178	219	201	184	50	1.6
70–74	72	78	82	93	102	95	23	0.7
75 and above	32	33	37	54	64	47	15	0.5
Total	**41 273**	**41 426**	**41 081**	**40 131**	**39 651**	**38 105**	**(3 168)**	**(100)**

Category

3. A further analysis of age by category and grade (see table 2) shows that the largest decrease in staff has been in the G-2 to G-4 grades, which comprise staff members who are younger than the overall average age.

Table 2

All staff of the Secretariat by category/grade and average age as at 30 June for 2013 to 2016 and as at 31 December for 2016 and 2017

	30 June 2013		*30 June 2014*		*30 June 2015*		*30 June 2016*		*31 December 2016*		*31 December 2017*		*Change from 2013 to 2017*	
Category/grade	*Number of staff*	*Average age*	*Number of staff*	*Average age*	*Number of staff*	*Average age*	*Number of staff*	*Average age*	*Number of staff*	*Average age*	*Number of staff*	*Average age*	*Number of staff*	*Average age*
Professional and higher														
USG	68	62.1	75	62.5	78	61.9	79	62.5	73	62.5	72	62.2	4	0.1
ASG	78	57.4	80	58.1	88	58.3	80	58.4	84	58.9	78	58.4	0	1.0
D-2	158	55.4	160	55.5	163	55.7	163	55.8	156	55.9	158	55.7	0	0.3
D-1	531	54.0	530	54.1	533	54.1	527	53.9	538	53.8	523	53.9	(8)	(0.1)
P-5	1 669	51.2	1 707	51.3	1 761	51.4	1 731	51.5	1 741	51.5	1 754	51.6	85	0.4
P-4	3 637	47.5	3 722	47.6	3 771	47.9	3 791	47.9	3 789	48	3 871	48.1	234	0.6
P-3	4 139	43.0	4 216	43.2	4 265	43.4	4 287	43.4	4 317	43.5	4 308	43.7	169	0.7
P-2	1 400	36.1	1 355	36.2	1 372	36.3	1 355	36.4	1 328	36.6	1 298	36.7	(102)	0.6
P-1	25	29.4	18	29	21	30	22	29.6	17	28.1	17	30.2	(8)	0.8
INT	389	55.6	393	54.3	334	57.2	540	54.2	562	55.2	436	55.1	47	(0.5)
R	12	63.1	12	66.3	13	66.9	44	70.8	35	72	28	71.1	16	8.0
T	114	58.4	152	54.6	191	55.8	218	51.9	209	53	176	52.9	62	(5.5)
Subtotal	**12 220**	**46.0**	**12420**	**46.2**	**12 590**	**46.5**	**12 837**	**46.6**	**12 849**	**46.7**	**12 719**	**46.7**	**499**	**0.7**
Field Service														
FS-7	34	55.2	31	55.3	27	55.2	26	55.7	27	55.3	24	55.3	(10)	0.1
FS-6	355	49.9	372	50.2	388	50.5	389	50.5	408	50.4	423	50.6	68	0.7
FS-5	1 352	47.6	1 469	47.6	1 619	47.5	1 614	47.7	1 587	48	1 602	48.6	250	1.0
FS-4	2 210	44.8	2 164	45.3	2 024	45.9	1 903	46.3	1 829	46.7	1 613	47.1	(597)	2.3
FS-3	149	46.7	113	47.3	82	47.9	49	49.2	43	49.2	33	50	(116)	3.3
FS-2	3	40.3	2	45.5	2	46.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	(3)	–
Subtotal	**4 103**	**46.3**	**4 151**	**46.7**	**4 142**	**47.1**	**3 981**	**47.4**	**3 894**	**47.7**	**3 695**	**48.2**	**(408)**	**1.9**
General Service and related														
NPO-D	24	46.3	25	47.9	29	48.1	31	49.1	33	49.4	32	50.3	8	4.0
NPO-C	252	46.9	262	46.8	286	47.1	293	47.3	309	46.8	321	46.4	69	(0.5)
NPO-B	861	42.3	926	43	1 010	42.7	1083	43.1	1 125	42.9	1 178	43.1	317	0.8
NPO-A	590	39.5	667	40	657	40.3	625	40.9	658	41.1	594	41	4	1.5

Category grade	30 June 2013		30 June 2014		30 June 2015		30 June 2016		31 December 2016		31 December 2017		Change from 2013 to 2017	
	Number of staff	Average age	Number of staff	Average age	Number of staff	Average age	Number of staff	Average age	Number of staff	Average age	Number of staff	Average age	Number of staff	Average age
G-7	825	47.7	839	47.9	855	48.2	849	48.3	854	48.3	887	48.6	62	0.9
G-6	3 058	45.4	3 106	45.6	3 134	45.9	3 088	46.1	3 114	46.1	3 213	46.2	155	0.8
G-5	4 847	42.5	4 936	42.7	5 082	42.8	4 957	43	4 902	43.2	5 008	43.3	161	0.8
G-4	6 550	39.8	6 467	40.5	6 249	40.9	6 076	41.5	5 875	41.7	5 435	42	(1 115)	2.2
G-3	4 897	40.7	4 729	41.3	4 451	41.8	4 094	42.4	3 810	42.6	3 022	43.2	(1 875)	2.5
G-2	2 432	39.2	2 371	40.1	2 083	41.3	1 735	42.7	1 748	42.9	1 527	43.6	(905)	4.4
G-1	90	36.3	59	37.7	60	37	45	36.6	40	37.8	33	27.6	(57)	(8.7)
TC	131	48.5	99	48.4	91	48.6	88	48.6	87	49.1	83	48.7	(48)	0.2
LT	34	47.5	32	47.4	34	46.7	33	47.1	34	46.9	33	46.4	(1)	(1.1)
PIA	23	33.6	23	33.4	22	34.9	25	34.2	27	33.9	29	33	6	(0.6)
SS	336	40.3	314	41.6	306	42.6	291	43.2	292	43.2	296	43.5	(40)	3.2
Subtotal	**24 950**	**41.6**	**24 855**	**42.1**	**24 349**	**42.6**	**23 313**	**43.1**	**22 908**	**43.3**	**21 691**	**43.6**	**(3 259)**	**2.0**
Total	**41 273**	**43.4**	**41 426**	**43.8**	**41 081**	**44.2**	**40 131**	**44.6**	**39 651**	**44.8**	**38 105**	**45.1**	**(3 168)**	**1.7**

Abbreviations: ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; D, Director; FS, Field Service; G, General Service; INT, interpreters; LT, language teachers; NPO, National Professional Officers; P, Professional; PIA, public information assistants; R, revisers; SS, security; T, translators; TC, Trades and Crafts category; USG, Under-Secretary-General.

Professional category and above: age upon entry on duty

4. The age of professional staff was reviewed (see table 3), and it was found that for many professional grades, the age of staff upon entry on duty appears to be higher than the potential minimum age based on the corresponding work experience and education requirements. In addition, the average age of professional staff is significantly higher than the potential minimum age. The analysis suggests that the Secretariat is recruiting talent with significantly more years of work experience compared with the minimum requirement. It is also consistent with the previous analysis by the Joint Inspection Unit,[3] in which it was noted that the average age upon entry on duty is relatively high due to the low number of junior posts and that employment in the United Nations system is often a second career after some experience in national government or the private sector.

Table 3
Professional staff of the Secretariat by grade, average age upon entry and average age as at 31 December 2017

Grade	*Number of staff as at 31 December 2017*[a]	*Minimum work experience requirement*	*Potential minimum age based on work experience and education requirements*	*Average age upon entry*	*Additional years of work experience (average age upon entry less potential age with minimum work experience)*	*Average age as at 31 December 2017*	*Additional years of work experience (average age less potential age with minimum work experience)*
D-2	158	over 15	40	45.0	5	55.7	15.7
D-1	523	15	39	42.2	3.2	53.9	14.9
P-5	1 754	10	34	39.9	5.9	51.6	17.6
P-4	3 871	7	31	39.1	8.1	48.1	17.1
P-3	4 308	5	29	37.8	8.8	43.7	14.7
P-2	1 298	0	22	32.4	10.4	36.7	14.7

Notes: Potential age with minimum work experience and education requirements is based on the assumption that the staff member attained an advanced degree at the age of 24, to which the minimum work experience requirement is added. At the P-2 level, the assumed age is 22 (given that only a first-level degree is required in the young professionals programme).

[a] Excludes interpreters, revisers and translators.

Gender

5. The average age of female staff in the Secretariat is slightly lower than that of male staff (see table 4 below), and the average ages of both female and male staff have increased slightly.

[3] See JIU/REP/2007/4.

Table 4
Average age of Secretariat staff by gender as at 30 June for 2013 to 2016 and as at 31 December for 2016 and 2017

	30 June 2013	30 June 2014	30 June 2015	30 June 2016	31 December 2016	31 December 2017	Change from 30 June 2013 to 31 December 2017: Average age	Change from 30 June 2013 to 31 December 2017: Annual percentage change in average age
Female	42.9	43.3	43.6	43.9	44.1	44.2	1.3	0.61
Male	43.6	44.1	44.5	45	45.2	45.6	2.0	0.92
Average age	43.4	43.8	44.2	44.6	44.8	45.1	1.7	0.78

Job code

6. Further to the forecast of retirements by job network, retirements were also forecast by job family and job code, which also showed no significant number of retirements.

Table 5
Forecast of retirements from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2027 by job network and family for all staff of the Secretariat as at 31 December 2017

(Population: 35,109[a])

Job network/family	Number of staff in job network/family	Average yearly number of staff retirements 2018–2027 (if all retire at 65)	Average yearly retirements as a percentage of staff in job network/family
Economic, Social and Development Network			
Drug control and crime prevention	262	4.3	1.64
Economic affairs	656	14.8	2.26
Environmental affairs	74	1.3	1.76
Population affairs	36	0.8	2.22
Programme management	1 887	28.4	1.51
Public administration	27	0.6	2.22
Social affairs	266	5.3	1.99
Statistics	258	4.8	1.86
Sustainable development	28	0.9	3.21
Subtotal	**3 494**	**61.2**	**1.75**
Public Information and Conference Management Network			
Conference services	500	12.5	2.50
Documentation and information	196	4.3	2.19
Language	1 820	43.9	2.41
Protocol	56	1.4	2.50
Public information	1 222	19	1.55
Subtotal	**3 794**	**81.1**	**2.14**

Job network family	*Number of staff in job network family*	*Average yearly number of staff retirements 2018–2027 (if all retire at 65)*	*Average yearly retirements as a percentage of staff in job network family*
Information and Telecommunication Technology Network			
Information management systems	1 601	18.9	1.18
Media technology	85	1.4	1.65
Telecommunications technology	598	11.5	1.92
Subtotal	**2 284**	**31.8**	**1.39**
Legal Network			
Jurists	39	0.7	1.79
Legal affairs	531	7.7	1.45
Subtotal	**570**	**8.4**	**1.47**
Logistics, Transportation and Supply Chain Network			
Engineering	490	9.4	1.92
Facilities management	1 329	19.8	1.49
Human settlements	84	1.6	1.90
Logistics and supply chain	1 304	18.2	1.40
Property and asset management	481	8.1	1.68
Transportation	3 135	53.2	1.70
Subtotal	**6 823**	**110.3**	**1.62**
Management and Administration Network			
Administration	3 907	66.9	1.71
Audit	170	2.9	1.71
Ethics	7	0.3	4.29
Finance	1 377	18.6	1.35
Human resources	1 213	19.4	1.60
Inspection and evaluation	10	0.3	3.00
Investigation	116	2.6	2.24
Investment management	5	0.2	4.00
Management and analysis	74	0.9	1.22
Ombudsman	16	0.7	4.38
Procurement	512	8.9	1.74
Subtotal	**7 407**	**121.7**	**1.64**
Political, Peace and Humanitarian Network			
Civil affairs	288	4.7	1.63
Electoral affairs	54	1.4	2.59
Human rights affairs	924	10.1	1.09
Humanitarian affairs	511	6.7	1.31
Political affairs	1 525	22.1	1.45

Job network family	*Number of staff in job network family*	*Average yearly number of staff retirements 2018–2027 (if all retire at 65)*	*Average yearly retirements as a percentage of staff in job network family*
Rule of law	393	7	1.78
Security institutions	204	3.3	1.62
Subtotal	**3 899**	**55.3**	**1.42**
Internal Security and Safety Network			
Safety	223	1.1	0.49
Security	4 189	47.7	1.14
Subtotal	**4 412**	**48.8**	**1.11**
Science Network			
Medical	290	6.4	2.21
Natural and life sciences	16	0.2	1.25
Subtotal	**306**	**6.6**	**2.16**
Other[b]	2 120	30.1	1.42
Total	**35 109**	**555.3**	**1.58**

[a] Excludes Under-Secretaries-General, Assistant Secretaries-General and staff with temporary appointments.
[b] Secretariat staff administered by the United Nations Development Programme who currently have no recorded job code in Umoja.

Table 6
Forecast of retirements from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2027 by job code for all staff of the Secretariat as at 31 December 2017[a]

(Population: 35,109[b])

Job network family	*Job title*	*Average yearly number of staff retirements 2018–2027 (if all retire at 65)*	*Average yearly retirements as a percentage of total annual retirements*
MAGNET/Administration	Staff Assistant (G-5)	7.6	1.40
LOGNET/Transportation	Heavy Vehicle Operator (G-3)	7.4	1.30
MAGNET/Administration	Administrative Assistant (G-5)	7.2	1.30
SAFETYNET/Security	Security Officer (FS-4)	6.5	1.20
MAGNET/Administration	Administrative Assistant (G-6)	6	1.10
SAFETYNET/Security	Security Officer (FS-5)	5.7	1.00
DEVNET/Programme management	Programme Management Assistant (G-6)	5.4	1.00
MAGNET/Administration	Administrative Assistant (FS-5)	5	0.90
MAGNET/Administration	Administrative Assistant (FS-4)	4.6	0.80
LOGNET/Transportation	Vehicle Technician (G-4)	4.5	0.80
DEVNET/Programme management	Programme Management Officer (P-4)	4.4	0.80
INFONET/Language	Field Language Assistant (G-4)	4.4	0.80
SAFETYNET/Security	Field Security Guard (G-2)	4.1	0.70
MAGNET/Administration	Team Assistant (G-4)	3.9	0.70

Job network family	*Job title*	*Average yearly number of staff retirements 2018–2027 (if all retire at 65)*	*Average yearly retirements as a percentage of total annual retirements*
DEVNET/Programme management	Senior Programme Management Officer (P-5)	3.6	0.60
POLNET/Political affairs	Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5)	3.5	0.60
DEVNET/Economic affairs	Economic Affairs Officer (P-4)	3.4	0.60
LOGNET/Transportation	Light Vehicle Driver (G-3)	3.3	0.60
MAGNET/Administration	Staff Assistant (G-6)	3.1	0.60
MAGNET/Human resources	Human Resources Assistant (G-6)	3.1	0.60
	Other titles (1 066)	458.6	82.50
Total		**555.3**	**100.00**

Abbreviations: DEVNET, Economic, Social and Development Network; INFONET, Public Information and Conference Management Network; LOGNET, Logistics, Transportation and Supply Chain Network; MAGNET, Management and Administration Network; POLNET, Political, Peace and Humanitarian Network; SAFETYNET, Internal Security and Safety Network.

[a] Top 20 job codes with largest number of average annual retirements.

[b] Excludes Under-Secretaries-General, Assistant Secretaries-General and staff with temporary appointments.

United Nations A/73/372/Add.2

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 September 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 142 of the provisional agenda*
Human resources management

Mobility

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/265, in which the Assembly requested a comprehensive review of the managed mobility and career development framework. It is a continuation of reports submitted by the Secretary-General to the Assembly since the sixty-ninth session regarding the implementation of the framework.

* A/73/150.

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I. Introduction

1. The Secretary-General has proposed a new management paradigm for the Secretariat. To confront global challenges and to remain relevant in a fast-changing world, he envisions a United Nations that empowers managers and staff, simplifies processes, increases accountability and transparency and improves on the delivery of its mandates. Staff mobility is part of the Secretary-General's vision for a nimble, effective, transparent, accountable and efficient Organization.

2. In line with the efforts of the Secretary-General to simplify and streamline the Organization's processes, and in line with the request of the General Assembly for a five-year review of the current framework,[1] the Secretary-General has paused implementation of the mobility and career development framework in order to reflect on prior efforts to enhance staff mobility and to develop an approach that is consistent with the new management paradigm and is aimed at building a workforce for the future.

3. The present report summarizes the methodology followed in conducting the comprehensive review, the key findings and the lessons learned. Given that the mobility and career development framework had only begun to be implemented (with the operationalization of two out of seven networks), the time frame for the comprehensive review and its findings is limited to the lessons from that period.

Background

4. The current mobility and career development framework approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/265 consisted of two parts:

(a) Managed mobility: An internal process for the lateral movement of staff members, in which serving staff members express interest in encumbered positions. Staff members participating in the process are those who have reached either their maximum position occupancy limit[2] in the second year of network implementation or their minimum position occupancy limit[3] for those who choose to opt in;

(b) Filling of vacancies: Advertisement of existing and anticipated vacant positions, open to all candidates (external and internal) for selection.

5. As agreed by the General Assembly, the new framework was implemented in phases, with one job network operationalized in 2016 and one in 2017, and the operationalization of two job networks planned for each year thereafter. The first job network, the Political, Peace and Humanitarian Network (POLNET), was implemented in 2016. The second job network, the Information and Telecommunication Technology Network (ITECNET), was implemented in 2017. Status updates on the implementation of the framework were provided to the General

[1] The General Assembly, in its resolution 68/265, approved the refined managed mobility framework, and requested the Secretary-General to submit annual reports on mobility until its seventy-second session, and a five-year comprehensive review of the mobility framework at its seventy-third session.

[2] The maximum period of time a staff member is normally allowed to serve in a rotational position. The maximum position occupancy limit was seven years for duty stations classified as H or A, four years for duty stations classified as B or C and three years for duty stations classified as D or E. The classification of duty stations is performed by the International Civil Service Commission.

[3] The minimum period of time a staff member is normally required to serve in a rotational position before being able to participate in a managed mobility exercise or apply to a vacant position. The minimum position occupancy limit is two years of continuous service in a position in duty stations classified as H, A, B or C, and one year of continuous service in duty stations classified as D or E.

Assembly at each of its sessions (see A/69/190/Add.1, A/70/254, A/71/323/Add.1 and A/72/767).

6. In order to ensure that the comprehensive review could be undertaken and a recommendation on next steps developed, the Secretary-General decided to pause implementation of the mobility and career development framework in December 2017 (see ST/SGB/2016/3/Rev.1).

7. Accordingly, no new exercises were initiated in 2018, and no additional job networks were operationalized. The vacancy exercise for POLNET that was still under way at the end of 2017 was concluded by 31 July 2018.

8. Staff members were advised, in an iSeek article on 22 January 2018, that mobility was a "critical component of the Secretary-General's vision for a nimble, effective, transparent, accountable and efficient Organization, and will be an important focus of the reform efforts". During the pause, staff members have been encouraged to continue to pursue opportunities to be mobile and gain exposure to new areas of work, other departments and offices, and different locations.

II. Comprehensive review

A. Objective

9. The purpose of the review was to assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the mobility and career development framework in achieving the objectives set out initially.

10. The mobility and career development framework had three objectives, as expressed in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Towards a global, dynamic and adaptable workforce: mobility" (A/68/358):

(a) It should enable the Organization to better retain and deploy a dynamic, adaptable and global workforce that can effectively meet current and future mandates and evolving operational needs;

(b) It should provide staff with broader opportunities for career development and contribution to the Organization and enable the further acquisition of new skills, knowledge and experience within and across departments and duty stations;

(c) It should ensure that staff members have equal opportunities for service across the United Nations and, for relevant functions, a fair sharing of the burden of service in difficult duty stations.

B. Implementation of the framework

11. The framework was implemented through semi-annual staffing exercises composed of two parts:

(a) An exercise for the filling of vacant positions in the Professional and higher categories, up to and including the D-2 level, and in the Field Service category, that are available for one year or longer, the process beginning with the advertisement of a job opening and concluding with the selection of a candidate for the position;

(b) A managed mobility exercise for staff members in the Professional and higher categories, up to and including the D-2 level, and in the Field Service category who are subject to managed mobility, the process beginning with the circulation of a compendium and concluding with the placement of eligible candidates.

12. The vacancy exercise was voluntary and open to all candidates, external and internal. The managed mobility exercise was an internal process for the lateral movement of staff members who had reached either their maximum position occupancy limit in the second year of implementation or their minimum position occupancy limit for those who chose to opt in. In the first year, the managed mobility exercise was an opt-in exercise; therefore, staff members who had reached their maximum position occupancy limit were not automatically subject to lateral reassignment.

Management structure of the framework

13. The mobility framework was managed by a centralized system of boards:

(a) Job network board: Each job network (POLNET and ITECNET) had a job network board which was responsible for making recommendations regarding selection and reassignment decisions with respect to Professional (P-1 to P-5) levels[4] and Field Service positions to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management for decision;

(b) Senior review board: Recommendations for selection and reassignment of staff at the D-1 or D-2 levels were undertaken by the senior review board, which was composed of Assistant Secretaries-General and Under-Secretaries-General;

(c) Global central review body: A global central review body ensured the integrity of the process for filling vacant positions with respect to selections at the P-3 to P-5 levels and in the Field Service category;

(d) Special Constraints Panel: The Special Constraints Panel was set up to review requests from staff members who were unable to accept a proposed move to a position in which they had not expressed interest. The panel provided its findings directly to the job network boards and the senior review board, as appropriate.

14. The process was implemented by full-time network staffing teams in the Office of Human Resources Management, financed from within existing resources. The network staffing teams were responsible for the implementation of the semi-annual exercises and were composed of Professional-level network staffing officers with expertise in staffing, and subject matter experts[5] with direct experience with the substantive work of the relevant job network.

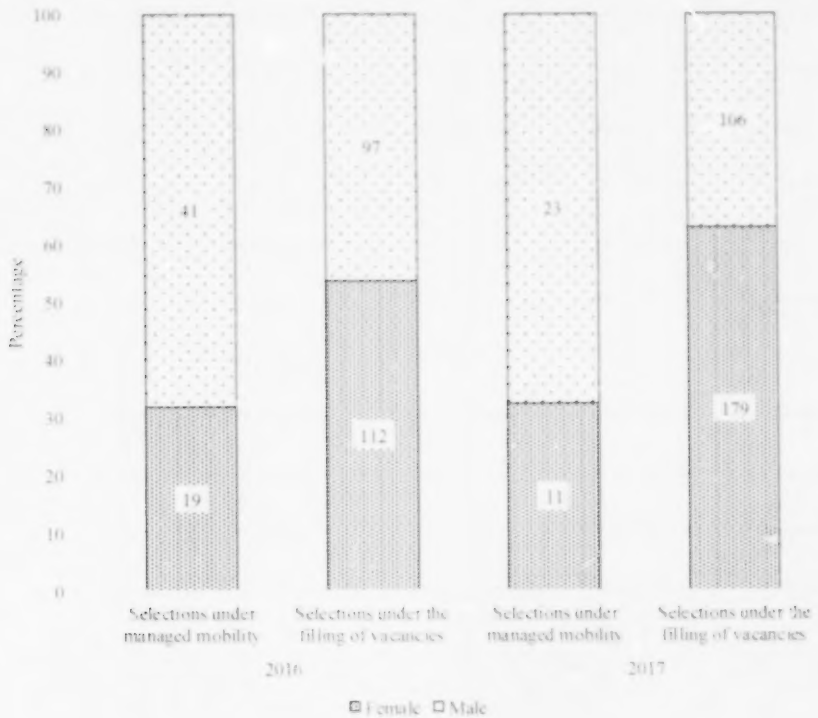
Staff movements: selections and placements

15. Seven semi-annual exercises were conducted for POLNET: two for managed mobility and two for the filling of vacancies in 2016; and one for managed mobility and two for the filling of vacancies in 2017. One exercise for managed mobility and one for the filling of vacancies were conducted for ITECNET in 2017. The results of those exercises are shown in figures I and II.

[4] Staff at the P-1 or P-2 level who were appointed through the Young Professionals Programme or a national competitive recruitment examination were not included.

[5] See A/67/324/Add.1 and A/69/190/Add.

Figure I
Selections under the managed mobility and vacancy exercises of the Political, Peace and Humanitarian Network, 2016–2017



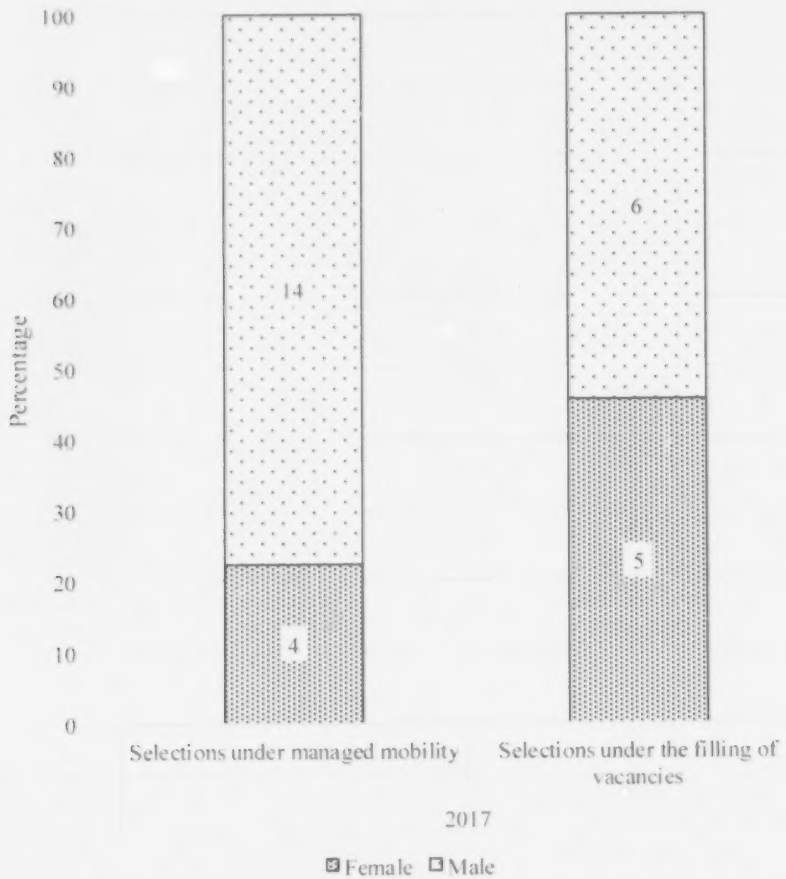
16. For POLNET, in 2016, 188 staff members were deemed eligible to participate in the managed mobility exercise and 60 staff members (32 per cent) were selected for placement. Of the 60 placements, however, some staff members were not able to move to their new positions for a variety of reasons, including visa issues, the downsizing of missions after the start of the exercise and funding issues. The final outcome of the 2016 managed mobility exercise was that 35 staff members (19 per cent of the eligible participants) were able to move to new positions.

17. In 2017, of the 113 staff members eligible to participate, 34 (32 per cent) were selected for placement. Of those, 9 per cent were not able to move. The final outcome of the 2017 managed mobility exercise was that 31 staff members (27 per cent of the eligible participants) were able to move.

18. In the vacancy exercises in 2016 and 2017 for POLNET, there were 494 selections, of which 60 per cent resulted from recruit-from-roster job openings and 40 per cent from position-specific job openings.

19. The POLNET exercises had a positive result with respect to the objective of gender parity. The vacancy exercises resulted in 59 per cent of the selections being of a female candidate. In the managed mobility exercises, 32 per cent of the placement decisions involved the selection of a female candidate.

Figure II
Selections under the managed mobility and vacancy exercises of the Information and Telecommunication Technology Network, 2017



20. In 2017, 37 staff members participated in the ITECNET managed mobility exercise. Eighteen staff members (49 per cent) were recommended for placement. All staff members were recommended for placement in available positions that they had ranked as one of their top three choices. The final outcome of the managed mobility exercise was that 14 staff members (38 per cent of the eligible participants) were able to move.

21. In the vacancy exercise, there were 11 job openings (5 of which were recruit-from-roster openings) and 11 selections. It should be noted that the number of selections for ITECNET is smaller than for POLNET, reflecting the fact that POLNET is a much larger job network than ITECNET.

22. With respect to gender, for ITECNET 45 per cent of those selected for vacancies were female candidates, and 22 per cent of the placement recommendations in the managed mobility exercise were of female candidates.

C. Methodology of the comprehensive review

23. The review focused on the following three fundamental questions:

(a) To what extent were the activities undertaken under the mobility framework aligned with its overall mandate?

(b) How effective has the mobility framework been in ensuring that it achieves its objectives?

(c) How efficient were the structural arrangements put in place for implementing the mobility framework?

24. The review employed the following qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. All review results were analysed taking into consideration these multiple data sources.

Document review

25. A desk review was conducted which included all relevant documents, ranging from the staff selection system described in administrative instruction ST/AI/2010/3, as amended, to the implementation of the mobility framework governed by ST/AI/2016/1, as amended, and also including General Assembly resolutions, Secretary-General's bulletins, administrative instructions, reports of the Secretary-General, standard operating procedures for the various parts of the framework, process flows and communications on the staff selection system.

Interviews

26. Interviews were undertaken with heads of departments, offices and missions or their representatives, executive officers and the chairs of the job network boards.

Focus groups

27. Focus groups were held for functional entities: human resources counterparts (at Headquarters and in the field), network staffing teams, job network boards for POLNET and ITECNET, the Staff-Management Committee and the Special Constraints Panel.

28. Focus groups were also held for staff in the nine existing job networks: POLNET and ITECNET, plus the seven job networks[6] that had not as yet participated in the implementation of the mobility framework.

Online surveys

29. Online surveys were sent to staff members who participated in the POLNET or ITECNET exercises, as well as to the staff members from those two job networks who did not participate[7] and to programme managers.[8]

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[6] Economic, Social and Development Network (DEVNET); Public Information and Conference Management Network (INFONET); Legal Network (LEGALNET); Logistics, Transportation and Supply Train Network (LOGNET); Management and Administration Network (MAGNET); Internal Security and Safety Network (SAFETYNET); and Science Network (SCINET).

[7] The survey was sent to 6,038 staff members, of which 218 received two surveys, owing to their participation in a managed mobility and a vacancy exercise. The overall response rate among the 6,038 staff members invited to take the survey was 47 per cent and the response rate for staff who received the second survey was 56 per cent.

[8] The survey was sent to 688 programme managers. The overall response rate was 40 per cent, ranging from 28 per cent (programme managers involved in the managed mobility exercise with no reassigned staff) to 43 per cent (programme managers involved in the vacancy exercise).

Data analysis

30. Human resources data from HR Insight, the Umoja enterprise resource planning system and the Inspira online recruitment tool, including data on moves, service in hardship duty stations[9] and the length of selection processes, were analysed.

31. The gender dimension was incorporated into the review through the inclusion of targeted questioning in the interviews and the disaggregation of survey data by gender to identify notable gender differences in the findings.

D. Key findings

32. The findings outlined in the present section are based on a holistic analysis of the five data sources described in section C above.

1. Mobility remains important for the Organization

33. In 2012, the Secretariat conducted a staff survey to collect staff opinions on mobility within the Secretariat. To the question "How important is mobility to internationally recruited staff?", the majority of staff considered it important to work in different departments, offices or missions (86 per cent) and different duty stations (83 per cent). Almost as many (79 per cent) expected to work in different duty stations when they joined the United Nations Secretariat and, of those, almost 70 per cent expected that the Organization would move them to different duty stations. When asked if the Organization should ensure that international staff did not remain in hardship duty stations for too long, a large majority agreed (84 per cent); a large majority also agreed that the Organization should assume greater responsibility for moving international staff to different duty stations periodically (81 per cent).

34. In 2018, findings[10] for the present review confirm that staff and managers continue to view mobility as an important element in meeting the Organization's mandate and addressing the professional growth of staff. Mobility is required to meet the needs of offices with a large operational presence and ensure that people do not remain in difficult duty stations for too long.

2. One size does not fit all parts of the Secretariat

35. While it was uniformly recognized that the principles behind the mobility framework — opening career paths, providing opportunities for service across the Organization and ensuring burden-sharing — were sound and welcome, the review showed that there were flaws in the original design of the framework that created barriers to its success. The framework was based on the experiences of other United Nations entities without considering the specificity of the Secretariat and the dual nature of its entities: normative and operational. Unlike other United Nations entities, which have more focused mandates and smaller, more easily interchangeable workforces, the Secretariat workforce is much larger and covers a much wider range of functions, including, for example, those related to election monitoring,

[9] In the present document, "hardship" duty station refers to duty stations classified as D or E; "non-hardship" duty station refers to the duty stations classified as H, A, B or C as per the International Civil Service Commission classification.

[10] For the present review, "managers" refers to the following staff members who were interviewed: heads of department, office, mission or unit; and chiefs of staff and executive officers in Secretariat entities in New York and outside of New York. Functional focus groups and the nine focus groups for staff members are identified as such. When the views of the participants from the functional focus groups and the nine staff focus groups are similar, they are referred to as "participants from the focus groups".

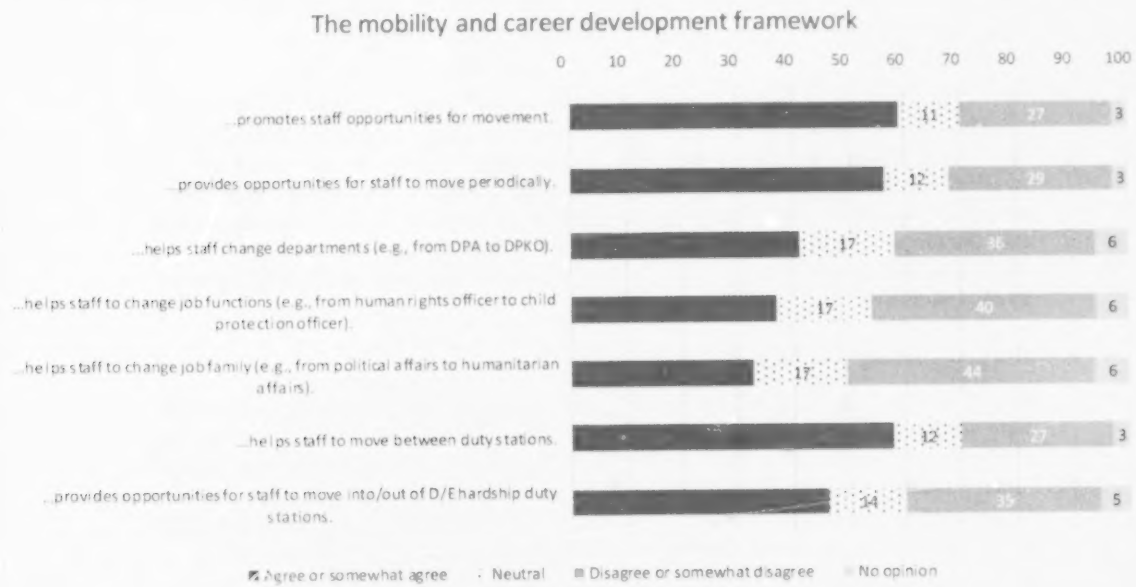
peacekeeping, humanitarian crises, human rights, conference servicing, economic affairs and political affairs. The mobility framework was implemented as a single, one-size-fits-all, system that did not account for the different requirements of its entities or the specificities of each of the nine job networks.

3. Opportunities for different types of movement are not the same

36. The review revealed that, while the framework provided opportunities to move between duty stations, it was less effective at providing opportunities to move functionally or between job families within the job networks.

37. Specifically, of the staff surveyed, 59 per cent agreed that the mobility and career development framework promoted opportunities for movement and 58 per cent agreed that it helped staff to move between duty stations. However, staff were more likely to disagree that: (a) the mobility and career development framework helped staff to change job families and (b) the mobility and career development framework helped staff to change job functions (see figure III).

Figure III
Responses to staff survey



Note: Population size N = 6,038; respondents = 2,841 (47 per cent response rate).
Abbreviations: DPA, Department of Political Affairs; DPKO, Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

38. Managers and participants from the focus groups suggested that, although job networks were a good mechanism for the harmonization of functions, they could also create silos and make it difficult for staff to move across networks.

39. Thus, while the number of movements was limited during the two-year implementation period, the analysis shows that the framework did provide some options for mobility, but that much more varied options for movement (other than just within job networks) are required.

4. There were difficulties with matching people and positions

40. Matching people and positions proved difficult for several reasons. Programme managers surveyed identified as main challenges of the mobility framework the inability to sufficiently tailor the requirements of job openings and their inability to select preferred candidates for placement. In their opinion, that had resulted in difficulties in the smooth operations of their offices, as the reassigned candidates did not always meet the full requirements of the positions.

41. There were a number of obstacles to matching people and positions, including staff declining positions at the last minute or programme managers refusing to accept candidates. The problem was compounded further by the limited availability of posts at Headquarters, the downsizing of some missions and the open-ended nature of assignments, with no guarantees of job security for the future.

5. An internal mobility exercise is not compatible with the requirement to advertise all posts externally

42. A frequently cited complication in the design of the mobility framework was the requirement to advertise vacant posts externally, which severely restricted the pool of available positions for the internal managed mobility exercise. This created a complex two-track system: a mandatory managed mobility track with internal lateral moves and a voluntary track for the filling of vacancies. The two-track system was seen as an artificial and cumbersome arrangement.

43. The managed mobility exercise could have been more successful if all vacant positions had been included, thereby providing significantly more opportunities for movement for internal staff. Participants in the review repeatedly suggested that all available posts should be filled internally through a mobility system and that short-term assignments and position swaps should also be considered. Some managers said that the Organization should take advantage of United Nations reform to harmonize ways of doing business across the United Nations system and facilitate more inter-agency mobility.

6. Burden-sharing was limited

44. The review highlighted a general agreement that staff should not remain for too long in duty stations with a classification of D or E, that the Organization should establish a time frame for staff serving in those duty stations and that staff should understand the expectation for rotational service in those duty stations. The review found that the mobility framework had had a limited impact on addressing the challenge of rotating a high number of staff from field to non-field positions.

45. Uneven position occupancy limits between hardship and non-hardship duty stations, and the preferences of staff members themselves, undermined the objective of burden-sharing. Most of the staff movements in 2016 and 2017 under both streams (managed mobility and the filling of vacancies) were between hardship duty stations.[11]

46. The review shows that most of the staff members who opted in to the managed mobility exercise for POLNET in 2016 and those required to participate in 2017 were from hardship duty stations (82 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively). For ITECNET, in 2017, 56 per cent of the staff members who opted in to the managed mobility exercise were from hardship duty stations.

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[11] Detailed statistics are provided in the previous report of the Secretary-General on mobility (A/72/767).

47. Under managed mobility, 89 per cent of staff members were recommended for positions in which they had expressed interest for the POLNET 2016 and 2017 exercises and the ITECNET 2017 exercise, i.e. only 11 per cent were recommended for positions in which they had not expressed interest. Not all staff members from hardship duty stations expressed interest in moving to non-hardship duty stations; among the 155 participants from hardship duty stations in the POLNET 2016 managed mobility exercise, 37 (24 per cent) expressed interest only in other hardship duty stations. That figure dropped to 13 per cent in 2017.

48. Under the vacancy track for POLNET, 75 per cent of the selections in 2016 were of candidates in one hardship duty station for positions in another hardship duty station; in 2017, this was the case in 56 per cent of the selections. Under the vacancy exercise in 2016 and 2017, 20 per cent of the staff selections resulted in a shift from a hardship to a non-hardship duty station and vice versa. For ITECNET, 27 per cent of selections in 2017 were from hardship to non-hardship duty stations.

7. Parts of the process were cumbersome

49. The review revealed that parts of the process were cumbersome, partly as a result of lengthy and complicated procedures, along with the insufficient resources dedicated to its operation.

(a) Length and timing of the exercises

50. The length of the process was perceived as the main challenge for the vacancy track and as one of the main challenges for managed mobility track. During the implementation of the framework, the length of the recruitment timeline continued to exceed the target of 120 days.[12] The amount of time from the publication of the compendium to the selection of a candidate was an average of 153 days under the managed mobility track. Under the vacancy track, it took an average of 169 days from the issuance of the job opening to the selection of a candidate in 2016 and 2017.

51. The timing of the exercise was not convenient for some departments, as several actions were scheduled for September, which conflicted with the involvement of some departments in the start of the session of the General Assembly. The timing of the exercise (twice a year) was also deemed too infrequent, forcing entities to meet staffing needs through temporary job openings between exercises.

(b) Complicated procedures

52. The findings show that parts of the process were cumbersome and that there were too many steps and layers. Some steps were redundant, like the need for review by the global central review body before the job network board had made recommendations. Other steps in the process were misaligned, such as the review by the Special Constraints Panel, which occurred at the end of the process rather than at the beginning. Decisions by that panel on individual cases were taken after the preliminary recommendations of the job network board, forcing the board to reopen the process before making its final recommendations. Placing the review by the Special Constraints Panel at the beginning of the process would avoid the screening, testing and review of candidates who are unable to move.

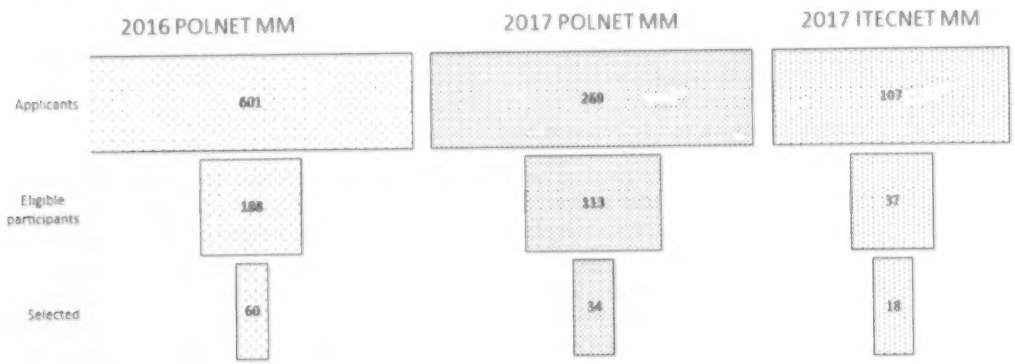
[12] The target of 120 days was set in the report of the Secretary-General on human resources management reform (A/55/253 and A/55/253/Corr.1).

(c) Limited movement via managed mobility

53. The review found that, despite a significant time commitment by the job network boards, relatively few selections were made considering the number of eligible or interested staff members participating in the managed mobility stream.

54. As shown in figure IV below, out of the 601 applicants in the 2016 POLNET managed mobility exercise, there were 188 eligible participants and only 60 selections made (a placement rate of 31 per cent). The trend was similar in 2017, with 269 applicants, 113 eligible participants and only 34 selections (a placement rate of 30 per cent). For the ITECNET managed mobility exercise in 2017, there were 107 applicants, 37 eligible participants and 18 selections made (a placement rate of 48 per cent).

Figure IV
Managed mobility: number of applications compared with eligible participants and selections



E. Lessons learned

55. Based on the findings from the comprehensive review of the mobility framework, the below lessons learned have emerged.

Lesson 1: A multifaceted approach to mobility is needed

56. The review has clearly shown that different entities and functions within the Secretariat have different needs in terms of staff mobility. The normative and operational parts of the Organization require different approaches, and within and across the nine job networks there should be flexibility for staff to move according to their qualifications and the nature of the specific positions.

Lesson 2: A culture of mobility needs to be established across the Secretariat

57. While it can be assumed that service in different locations is essential for an international civil servant, many staff members joined the Organization without this understanding. It is therefore essential that staff mobility become part of the culture, and that this expectation be clearly communicated to new staff members.

Lesson 3: Mobility initiatives in the Secretariat need to be resourced in order to be successful

58. The implementation of the mobility framework was financed from within existing resources. Given the need to operate within a resource-constrained

environment, a future mobility framework for the Secretariat would require limited additional resources.

Lesson 4: A mobility framework for the Secretariat should encourage increased movement into and out of difficult duty stations

59. Given the importance of the Secretariat's field operations, service in the field should be further incentivized. In particular, staff serving in the most difficult duty stations (with classifications of D or E) for extended periods should be prioritized for reassignment to other duty stations.

Lesson 5: A mobility framework for the Secretariat needs to be based on delegation of authority to departments and offices, supported by centralized policies and oversight

60. The review has shown that senior managers and programme managers want control over the selection of candidates, as they are best placed to know the requirements of the positions in their respective entities. This consideration is particularly important in the context of the Secretary-General's call for broad delegation of authority. At the same time, the review has highlighted the benefits of a centralized, standardized set of norms and standards to ensure consistency across all parts of the Secretariat.

Lesson 6: Mobility must become an integral part of career development

61. Mobility has a range of benefits for the career progression of staff members, and the Organization should make targeted career development interventions to facilitate mobility, including training, career counselling and linkages to performance management.

Lesson 7: The internal mobility programmes used by a number of other organizations of the United Nations System are not feasible for the United Nations Secretariat if vacant positions need to be advertised externally

62. The review found that the inclusion of the vacancy exercise within the mobility framework resulted in limited moves for existing staff members. The requirement of the General Assembly that vacant positions be advertised so that external candidates may apply hinders the possibility of using vacant positions for an internal mobility exercise. Therefore, to implement a model similar to those found in a number of other United Nations system organizations, the issue of internal advertisement of positions may need to be revisited.

Lesson 8: Mobility in the Secretariat should be built into succession planning, with a focus on developing junior to mid-level staff for future roles

63. As the Organization looks to develop its future workforce and leadership cadre, the exposure and experience that staff gain through mobility should be actively supported. Staff members currently serving in junior to mid-level professional roles (P-3 and P-4) should be offered opportunities to develop their skills through targeted mobility initiatives.

Lesson 9: A system of incentives is necessary to encourage mobility

64. Staff members have expressed a desire to manage their own mobility in keeping with their career goals, personal preferences and family needs. The Organization should consider better incentivizing self-managed mobility by linking it to career progression. This will create a clear expectation of mobility while empowering staff members to proactively manage their own career movements according to their needs.

Lesson 10: Mobility should be part of an integrated talent management strategy

65. As the mobility framework faced challenges in combining an internal managed mobility component with an internal and external exercise to fill vacancies, a future mobility framework should ensure that mobility is more closely embedded in the broader talent management strategy of the Organization, including by linking mobility to application requirements and creating incentives within the staffing system.

III. Next steps

66. Going forward, the Secretary-General will propose a new comprehensive mobility framework for the Secretariat, drawing on the findings and lessons learned of the comprehensive review. The new mobility system, which will be a core element of the Secretariat-wide approach to talent management, will be fully integrated with career development. The system will revolve around geographic mobility to build the nimble and adaptable workforce required for the Organization to meet its objectives and effectively deliver on the 2030 Agenda. It will also take into consideration experience elsewhere in the United Nations system and with other partners. Such an approach will ensure that managers and leaders of the future build a broad portfolio of experience in a variety of duty stations, across the spectrum of activities of the Secretariat and with a broad range of partners. This, in turn, will allow them to operate effectively in a variety of environments to implement the increasingly complex mandates entrusted to the United Nations. An effective system of mobility will also ensure that service in high-risk and isolated locations is managed effectively, in line with the Organization's duty of care to its staff, and is taken into consideration in the career advancement of staff.

67. At the level of the United Nations system, the Secretariat will continue to engage with the agencies, funds and programmes to support greater inter-agency mobility.

68. The details of this new approach to mobility will be developed in consultation with management and staff during 2019 and will be presented to the General Assembly for consideration at its seventy-fourth session.

IV. Action requested of the General Assembly

69. The General Assembly is requested to take note of the present report.